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THE

MAYOR OF WIND-GAP

AND

CANVASSING.

BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE

MAYOR OF WIND-GAP.

CHAPTER I.

An evening in the fine fresh month of May. Those Ephemera called, by some anglers, the May-fly, by some others the Green-Duke, and by some others, out of our country, whatever they choose to call them, had emerged in great abundance from their long imprisonment beneath the waters, and were now fulfilling the purposes of their brief atmospheric life. They swarmed in the slanting sun beams, whisking their (to them)

long tails, and fluttered their mottled wings, with such an appearance of thorough enjoyment, that it seemed as if their new state of being, was to be altogether devoted to worldly revelry and thoughtless love-making. In a very short time, however, after their sports, the contingent and inevitable cares, to which every animate atom is liable, engrossed them. They settled down upon the water, from which they had arisen, preparing for a voyage (to them literally a voyage down the stream of life); their wings, lately so alert, were, in order to serve them as sails during that voyage, soberly closed together; and as the current carried them along, they shed their ovæ upon it, that a new race might be ensured, who should frolic in the May-beam of the ensuing year; and their providential responsibility thus discharged, they drooped and died, after having been but for a few hours the denizens of the breeze, which had summoned them into a new existence.

While these tiny creatures made their short entrances and exits, the voracious and gigantic trout was not an idle observer of some of their motions. He gulped them down in scores, either in their journey upwards, from the bottom of the river, into the regions of air, and while yet unfledged for their airy gambols, or when subsequently floating on the stream in their maternal pride, he broke the water into circles, of each of which the centre was a little vortex, formed by him for their annihilation: nor was the trout the only devourer of these truly short-lived beings; the martin, the swallow, and the swift, glancing with arrowy speed through them in mid air, or over them on the river, snatched them from the very hey-day of their pastimes.

It is well known to all "brothers of the angle" that in this refreshing month of May, when the green-duke thus sails along the water, the sportsman who skilfully imitates,

and uses it, may expect to plod homeward, after the dusk of the evening, with his basket well laden on his back. Upon the evening then, which opens our tale, along the banks of a certain river in the south of Ireland, the most skilful deceiver of the finny tribe known in the parish pursued his recreation. Through all his operations, this individual displayed the skill of a master in his art. His fishing-rod, owing to the dexterity of his jerk, cut whistling through the calm air; his line fell smoothly and straightly on the stream, touching it even to a hair's breadth, at the exact point he wished; and, a good copy of the green-duke powerfully aiding him, his success was equal to his adroitness; for he drew forth trout after trout, in quick succession.

Maurteen Maher seemed rather an elderly man, yet quite alert in all his movements. He was tall and thin, with angular features, a sallow complexion and a shrewd eye; and

although many might call him ill-favoured, there was something inviting in his smile, and respectable in the steady intelligence of his look. The general expression of his face was, however, habit of observation, and a consciousness of intellectual superiority, perhaps ostentatiously displayed. His greyish well-combed hair, fell in great profusion on his shoulders, yet he wore over it,—or rather over half of it—a wig of three buckles; his hat was very broad-brimmed; his loose outside coat had an ample cape, and was drawn and held tight round his waist by a belt of horse-skin, which also performed the duty of suspending his fishing-panier.

In the act of extracting his favourite green-duke from a freshly-taken trout, Maurteen Maher suddenly bent his head downwards and listened.

"Aye, that's her own merry little laugh," —he soliloquized, "and 'twould be a pity, the happy heart that's in her body should

ever know the blight of sorrow; and yet, for all that, as lightly as she steps along—and no bird of spring is blither—sorrow will darken over her early, if Maurteen Maher does not stand her friend."

While he spoke these words slowly and sententiously, the object of his sympathy appeared in view. Although at the beginning of his soliloquy his acute ear had distinguished her approach, by the notes of her laugh, they had at the moment been hidden from each other, by a sudden sinuosity of the river, curving with the curve of the flowery bank by which it wandered. Now, as he discovered her at a distance, Maurteen looked steadily towards the owner of "the happy little heart," and continued talking to himself:—

"The boy is at her side of a surety—and tisn't the running wather, nor the May-bush full of its blossom that he cares to be looking on; no—he's looking into her eyes to know

if the love is there; and tis'nt the song of the thrush nor the note of the sky-lark above his head, that he's giving ear to; no—he hears nothing but her silver little voice, that turns all she spakes into music. She's joking at him, I see: Och! aye; but the glance she gives to him, and the smile that's on her lips, don't mane to tell us that she's so hard-hearted entirely. It is just the way I thought it was. He's not the shape of a *gorsoon* a girl would darken her brow at.—Sure if it's a thing that a purty creature in the bloom of her beauty makes a boy's heart leap with joy, a young colleen may like the lad that's comely and goes brave; aye; that's a story of ould standing, as ould as the time that Adam used to be coorting Eve. Long ago: but I'll tell ye my notion; if the good luck happened that our great-grandmother, Mistress Eve, was an ugly ould crature with wrinkles on her face, and no teeth in her gums,—when poor Adam first

set his eye upon her, by my good troth we'd be in Paradise this blessed day; the poor fool of a gardener would never be ating that misfortunate apple, for an auld *calloch's* bidding, I'll be bound."

The persons thus commented on by Maurteen Maher, were a girl of twenty, and a youth perhaps a year older, and, judging by their dress, their manners, and their bearing, they belonged to the better class of society. We have never pretended to much talent in describing female beauty; in the present instance, however, it is no difficult task to say that Anny Kennedy was somewhat below the middle stature; of a perfect symmetry of shape, with a complexion, clear, brilliant, blooming, yet free of vulgar redness—

"The rose insensibly mingling with the lily,"

as young ladies love to write it. It is quite as easy to declare that she possessed very dark eyes, of which every glance was

merriment, shot through a dazzling sunniness — this latter quality, being softened, however, by the crystal moisture in which they swam; that her lips were very red, and very pouting, but not very saucily so—that most tantalizing expression relieving itself by an admixture of innocent playfulness; and we may add, that, anticipating her constant smile, there were courier-dimples near the corners of her mouth; that in the centre of her almost transparent chin there was the mark—

"Love's dimpling finger did impress;"

that, from beneath her large-leafed, low-crowned, black silk hat, her very black hair fell, of course

"In jetty ringlets on her snowy neck,"

aye, and sometimes wantoned over her shoulders; that her waist was tiny—for in those days young girls (and sometimes old ones too) laced themselves as tight as they

do in our own day; and that her little mouse-like feet hid themselves in shoes of which the heels were nearly three inches high, but which still did not succeed in spoiling the symmetry of the exceedingly pretty objects they covered. We have presumed to say, that there would be no difficulty in mentioning these things; but at last we own to ourselves that we fail in our effort to give an idea of the guileless happiness, the twinkling intellect, the almost childish, yet full, play of mind, catching merriment from every sympathizing object, and, withal, the scarce-hidden consciousness of superior beauty, and the youthful avidity to exact the tributes of its conquering influence, which ran through the whole of her expression.

Maurteen Maher has called Anny's companion "a gorsoon that a young colleen would not darken her brow at," and we think he was right. The lover's hair, as well as his mistress's, was very dark, his

face oval, and rather pale; his eye powerful, feeling, and of strong manly character; his lip curving beautifully, whether in sternness or in smiles;—his person finely formed. —There was in his look, his air, his manner, his most ordinary address, a depth, an ardency, and yet a pathos of expression: from the very manifestations of his mere exterior, he seemed to be a man who felt every thing intensely.—At present, even under the softening influence of the universal conqueror,—he was more self-absorbed than anything else. To be sure, the innocent lamb could not seem to be (if it ever has seemed any thing it was not) more gentle than he appeared to Anny;—and under any circumstance, or in the person of any other animal, his equal or his inferior in the intellectual scale, never could George Blundell have uttered gentler, or more timid, or even more slavish, sounds, than those to which his handsome mouth now gave utter-

ance;—never could his strong eye have been more moistened—more subdued—more half-put-out, in fact; and yet, it is still maintained—(or rather insinuated—for we do not want really to injure the boy, if we can help it)—that all the time Anny was thinking of him, during these symptoms, he was thinking nearly as much about himself as he was about her. Is it very new to assert such a thing?

Although Anny Kennedy loved her tamed enthusiast, still, prompted by the heyday consciousness of her beauty and her power, she sported with him. From this we infer that she never reflected how fiery a nature, passionate for good or evil, might lie hidden under his silky mildness of demeanor towards herself. But in truth, the effect upon him of her merely arch equivocations was, could she have understood it, something that she never would have provoked. The young man hoped, and feared,

doubted, and felt certain, triumphed, and desponded, was raised to ecstasy, or lowered to misery; and all this so fretted and fevered him, as to make George Blundell a very incompetent person to engage in any other matters of life, with the calmness of mind, and the precision of action, necessary for honourable success.

"In good truth, Mr. George Blundell," said Anny, shortly before she fell under the keen, though friendly, notice of Maurteen Maher—and as she spoke, she gave her head a little coquettish movement, that put in motion the jetty curls on her ivory brow, and caused to gambol over their loved resting place the ringlets which flowed to her neck —assuming, at the same time, a mock gravity of aspect, and yet turning the full glory of her glance upon her impatient, though obsequious, victim. "In good truth, Mr. George Blundell, there is something questionable in your conduct."

"Something questionable in my conduct, beautiful Anny? Good heaven,—of what can you suspect me, unworthy of the—— I mean, do you suppose I could be capable, in the slightest degree, of conceiving an idea of acting, in the most trifling matter, so as to give you—the least reason to—"

"Reason to think that you have been stringing together the most ridiculous set of words I have ever listened to? So that's something questionable, is it not?"—And she laughed.

He, too, tried to laugh; and, "Anny," said he, pathetically, "dear Anny, can you be serious for one minute?"

"Serious? no, indeed; serious I cannot be—serious I will not be; this is not the season for being serious; for hanging down the head and looking dull. No, Sir; come to me, and ask me to be serious, when the sky lowers—when the rough blast shakes doors and windows—when the chilly sleet

darkens the cheery sun—when our poor cat mopes at the hearth, and my little dog lies shivering on his cushion—(see how he frisks before me *now!*)—Mr. George Blundell, I am not made to be serious while the lark is soaring above me, filling the air and my poor ears with his trumpet-like melody; while the little bubbling billows of the stream dance jigs and country-dances to his music, in the light of the setting sun; while the swallow darts by me, twittering out his evening song; while the fresh breeze flirts with my cheek—"

"Ah!" sighed George Blundell, in a very long sigh—"That's a happy breeze, Anny—"

"To be sure it is! and it is so, because it is not serious;—look, Sir, look!"—and she touched his arm, and pointed across the river to a sloping meadow, with such sudden and fresh and true energy, that not only George Blundell, but also her faithful maid

in waiting, close behind them, started and looked frightened as if something was going to happen to it.

"See, how it frolics yonder, through the yet green hay! *That* has always pleased me, for it is always seen when lovely spring is at her full. Do you know, to my fancy, the in-earnest breeze sometimes appears in positive shape, as it skims over the tender meadow—"

"Darling Anny!—how beautiful and true every thing is when you describe it."

She laughed again most cheerily, and went on—

"And do you think, Master George Blundell, so foolishly of us female creatures, as not to have known beforehand that it was to make you admire me, as well as the meadow, that I described it so beautifully and true? Look again, Sir!—I intend to make you admire me a second time, in making you condescend to admire what God has

here strewn around our path, for every one's admiration. See those *not*-serious little birds, hopping and chirping from bough to bough—"

"Ah!" again sighed George Blundell, "those little birds hop and chirp from bough to bough, with nature's full permission to be happy; for, Anny, all those beautiful little creatures, so frolicksome in the light of this May evening, are happy lovers, with their beloved ones—"

"And," said Anny, "they make love merrily, do they not? Can you see long faces on them? or can you call their accents dolorous?"—and to this little second appeal her stupid companion was so insensible that he only began to muster up one of his long drawn sighs, when Anny and he, suddenly turning the elbow of the bank before alluded to, came almost in personal contact with Maurteen Maher, and she immediately accosted him—

"I wish you a good evening, Maurteen."

"*Cead mille beeachus!** my purty young lady, and I wish for you that seventy-seven May suns, like the pleasant sun of this blessed evening, may put the white blossom on the thorn-bush to give you pleasure, and open the flowers under your feet; and that to the last minute of the time I say, you may find it in your heart to be happy on a May-path."

"I thank you," said Anny, whole-laughing and half-crying, for old Maurteen's address had pathos in it. "I thank you heartily and sincerely, my good friend."

"Don't be thanking me at all, my blooming daisy; an ould man's words, be them ever so civil, are could and damp to the heart of the young, and the good, and the comely; but the kind salutation from the handsome lips of the young, and the good,

* A hundred thousand blessings.

and the comely, cheers the heart of the ould man, as if he sat forenent the breeze that blows from the rose-bush."

"On my word though, *you* are a very gallant, poetical old man, and know how to flatter to some purpose."

"When the snow and the sleet falls, my purty crature, I feel the years heavy upon me; when the May shines out, they are not so weighty to my shouldhers; and the smiling of your cheerful face, blessing upon it, is as pleasant to me as the blighthest May-day."

"Positively, you will turn my head, good Father."

"No danger in the world of that, my purty crature; the poor head, God help it, thinks it's full of wisdom; but the heart is 'cuter, and makes a fool of it, for all that; aye, and your own handsome head will be going on turning to the side where your heart turns, this moment, if every word out of my mouth was a costly jewel."

"Why, you seem skilled in things, Maurteen."

"I'd make a wager of a silver sixpence, you know right well I'm spaking the sound sense, purty lady; and if the brave young gentleman who has won the prize, does'nt jump sky-high for his fortune, Mastha! he's an ouldher man nor I am."

As Maurteen Maher said this, he glanced archly at George Blundell, and, before the blush had passed from Anny's face, the angler cried out in the utmost ecstasy—"I'm in him!—I'm in him, your sowl!—I'm in him!"

Himself and the reel of his fishing-rod seemed to have been seized with a sudden frenzy; the latter whizzed violently, as it spun round and round, apparently of its own accord, and its handle revolved so rapidly that its motion was scarce perceptible; and at the same instant Maurteen Maher ran eagerly along the bank of the

river, his distended eyes fixed on the water; anon he stopped suddenly, hurried back the way he had come, then down again, then up again, every muscle of his face and person in twitching motion.

Anny, who had never before seen an angler engaged in the crisis of his sport, thought Maurteen mad—poetical she had before deemed him. Shortly after, she saw a fish spring many feet out of the water, near the opposite bank, and vaguely conjectured that there must be some sympathy between it and her late flatterer; for Maurteen jumped high too, crying out in the greatest glee—

"*A sieve-maker!* by my conscience — *a sieve-maker*, every inch of him!"

George Blundell, occasionally an angler himself, knew more of those proceedings than did his fair mistress, and, to her increased astonishment, sympathised with them. Hurrying to his brother of the art,

he snatched the landing-net out of his left hand, ran after him as he ran up and down, here and there—and with bent body and eager eye, prepared to raise the trout from its native element. The poor victim of Maurteen's May-duke, while its strength continued equal to its fright, fluttered or darted through the river; gradually exhausted and passive, it opposed little resistance to its captor's cautious effort to wheel it nearer and nearer, till at length, quite weary, and now lying close under him, it seemed to invite George Blundell to put forth the net.

"Be sure of what you are about!" commanded Maurteen loudly. "Make no plunges at him!—Have a care there!—have a care, I bid ye!—Would he be off again?—troth, and I'll take care he shan't if I can help it—Now he comes—have a caution what you're at!—here he is, like a May-boy—dip the net—*dip* it under him, I say—

no plunging at him—blur-an-ages! if I lose this sieve-maker by your botching, I could find it in my heart to sthrike you!—aisy now—aisy!—watch your work now, I tell you!—now—now—that's it!"—and George Blundell succeeded in getting into the net he held a fine trout of five pounds' weight.

Anny approached as Maurteen Maher flung the now lifeless fish on the grass;—"the beautiful creature! the poor innocent thing!" she cried. "Oh! how cruel is your sport, good man."

"The poor innocent thing you call him, my purty lady? I never met a greater rogue of a sieve-maker, since I first wetted a line. Did ye mind how he strove by main force to get me round that stump and make geomethries of me?"

"To get you round a stump, and make geometries of you?" asked Anny. "Now, that's something more abstruse than geometry itself, to poor me."

"He means, Anny," said George Blundell, "that the fish, by his doublings and twinings, had nearly fastened his line to the stump of a tree; which event, had it really occurred, must have caused the line to snap, and the trout to escape."

"I wish from my heart it had so happened," said Anny. "He calls it by a ridiculous kind of name, a sieve-maker, I think—I should suppose that means a large trout?"

"And a large trout it is, Anny. But I will explain our friend's terms to you, for I have learned the vocabulary of the neighbouring anglers. Once upon a time, a person who followed the trade of a sieve-maker was remarkably fortunate in taking the largest fish on the river, and since his immortal day, his professional name is given to all trouts of an unusual size."

"You tould me, purty lady," resumed Maurteen Maher, "that I have a cruel way of divarting myself; now it's mighty plain

to know that a good throut, with a big body and a little head, a broad back, and spots on his side as wide as half-crown pieces, makes very good food for poor christians; and besides, little and big as they all are together, they were all bred and born and brought up in this river for people to ate; and, moreover agin; all living things make out their life by ating one another, barring they'd be sheep or cows, or bastes of that sort; and *we* ate *them* that ate only the grass; and, as harmless as you take that fish to be, there's more than two good hundred of flies in his craw this moment, and he swallowed them down alive as they sailed on the wather; and, hearken to me; he was like many of this world's rogues, enough would'nt satisfy him, but he must be greedy for more—and so he thought to plundher me of my poor May-duke; never dhramin' that he'd swallow the hook along with it."

"And these little things tied to your line, you call them flies?" said Anny.

"I call that tail-fly my desthroyer, purty lady; that middle one my tongue-tickler; and the next to that agin, my snout-snapper."

Anny was engaged examining these oddly named baits, when, at a little distance down the river, where the rapid which rippled by them terminated in a deep, still pool, a heavy plunge was heard. A ragged young urchin had ascended a tree which overhung the water; the branch on which he would make an excursion snapped across, and headlong downwards he was precipitated, shrieking vigorously as he fell. George Blundell darted to the spot. On his arrival at the faithless tree, the boy was beating the water with his arms, gasping, and at intervals, still crying out piteously—suddenly, the water whirled round him, and he disappeared beneath it. George

only waited to pull off his coat and shoes, and then dashed in. As he reached the still circling surface of the spot where the boy had sunk, the drowning creature suddenly emerged close to him, and at once grappled with his self-destined preserver.

"Knock him from you, or ye're both lost!" shouted Maurteen Maher, from the bank immediately above them, whither he had followed, with the trembling Anny, and her hand-clapping, and loud-screaming attendant.

George Blundell was evidently conscious of his danger; he used every effort to disengage himself; he succeeded in freeing the wrist which had been particularly seized upon; but, as the desperate boy again was sinking, he locked his arms firmly around the young man's legs; and the sensation produced by the act was terrible to George Blundell. He felt himself dragged downwards to his death; he struggled with

all his force, but in vain; the despairing grasp still clutched him, like a paralysis—he was sinking rapidly: a cry of horror escaped him—down, down he was dragged — he turned his look towards the bank; he caught a vague vision of Anny stretching her arms towards him; in another instant, he was lost to her view, and he did not hear the low gurgling shriek which escaped his hitherto coquetting mistress. The water of the deep pool for an instant quivered over him, and then settled into its usual placid stillness, as if lyingly innocent of the doom it had occasioned.

Scream after scream had burst from Anny, and now she became at once motionless and silent. The surface of the water was again broken; her lover appeared above it; she shouted out his name; he looked hastily and wildly around him; he fixed his eyes more meaningly upon her; he waved his right hand towards her, and dived down-

wards, a second time disappearing, but now voluntarily, from her eyes.

Again she looked on the unbroken water without uttering a sound. George almost immediately re-emerged, squeezing tightly to him, with one arm, the stiffened body of the boy; while with the other he struck feebly for the bank. He reached it, however, safely. Old Maurteen Maher, bending down from its edge, lifted up, with difficulty, the prize which his young friend extended towards him. George himself wearily scrambled to the green sod, and there sunk down exhausted. Anny sprung to his side; knelt over him, rubbed his cold and languid hands, and his cold forehead, and pallid cheeks, nay, even kissed his forehead, and, laughing and crying together, called him "her own George, her own dear George," and at last, "her own dear, dear, and dearest George," and asked him to live, and "to live for her sake;" and, as the young man became

feebler, she repeated these expressions again and again in his ears; now unconsciously resting on her knee his drooping, and indeed, his very dripping, head. He certainly did not hear her first words; but we half suspect that George Blundell imitated insensibility for a little time, after he had comprehended her repetitions of them. At all events, he at last opened his eyes. Anny's little hand touched his cheeks, and her warm living tears dropped upon his chilled and half-dead face. He turned his eyes to hers, and, in the idiom of a true young Irish lover, of his years and time, said—

"Ever and ever, blessed be this evening! for it hears Anny tell me that she loves me!"

Although blushing to the utmost tint of a blush, Anny bent her lips to his ear, and calling him brave, and benevolent, and charitable, and generous, with many other flattering epithets, repeated her assurances of affection.

George Blundell bounded to his feet, a much more happy man than he had been before he was half drowned. The birds he had so lately envied for their "hopping and chirping," and so forth, he now seemed to despise, by the superlative hopping and chirping, and so forth way, in which he walked homewards by the side of Anny Kennedy. We wish to give a somewhat more manly impression of the youth. He felt that he had successfully ventured his own life, to save that of a very humble and insignificant human creature, and this conviction did add elasticity to his limbs, and triumphant brightness to his eye.

Maurteen Maher, with the little tatterdemalion in his arms, now also reviving as well as he could, slowly advanced to the young pair, and addressed them:

"May the good God give you his blessing this evening, young gentleman! you

have a brave and a feeling heart—it will never pass from my mind that I saw you rising from the jaws of death, and then diving into them again, of your own accord, because you would not save yourself alone, and lave this little crature to lie stiff on the bottom of the river. He is the son of a neighbour of mine—of one that's dearer than a neighbour; he left his home with me this evening, to play at my side; and I b'leve I forgot him, when I hooked the sieve-maker; and t'would be a woful tale for me to tell, among the people that love him, that I left him a corpse under the water;—I strolled down here, this evening, may be, to have an eye on you both, as well as to thry the luck o'the Green-Duke; and, may be, for my own reasons. I had a regard for one and the other of you, beforehand; but, from this evening out, I'll sthrive to be your friend agin' the world. I won't put the chill upon your young sperrits, by say-

ing that there's a danger upon your road; but if mischief or ill-fortune ever overtakes you—listen to me:—at the very time you want a helpin' hand, then bring to your minds the ould Fisherman you met here this May-evening; and ye may have worse friends, or ye may have as thrue friends, but less able to do ye a sarvice, than Maurteen Maher, the Mayor of Wind-gap."

CHAPTER II.

In our first adventure before the awful world of literature, we attempted a description of the appearance, at some little distance, of a certain city in Ireland, as seen by two mystified lovers from a hill-side, early on a summer morning. We wonder, does any one now remember that sketch? we wonder, should we be able to try it, once again, merely, as before, from our recollections of a beloved place and prospect, even without recurrence to any former attempt? suppressing, at present, the name of the city, we

wonder, will any one recognize in our second outline, a likeness to our first? We wonder, too, have some ten long years, and not all of them very happy ones, dimmed, in memory's mirror, any of the chief features of our dear, dear scenery; and, above all things, we wonder, will any living creatures, but ourselves, go to the trouble of making any comparison on the subject? At all events, we hereby venture the experiment, changing, for certain reasons, our point of sight, yet in so unimportant a degree that no considerable omission of ours, should any such occur, can, on that account be excused.

The two lovers, for whose particular gratification we made our first picture, sat, as has been observed, on a hill-side, which fully commanded a view of the reality sketched for them. We now ascend the brow of that hill, almost in a straight line from them; pass, by a stepping-stile, a

wall which bounds it, and arrive on a road, which, running down precipitously before us, was, at the time of our present tale, although it is now superseded by a more level one, the only entrance from the metropolis into our city.

The river is seen, a depth below, its first appearance that of a darkened mirror; beyond, and high above it, towers an old feudal edifice, almost of princely structure, and in perfect preservation; but upon this feature, nearly the first in our landscape, we cannot assure ourselves of proving perfectly true to an Irish tourist of the present day and hour; for we are told that people have been pulling down our venerable old castle, and rebuilding, or remodelling it in some new fangled way or other; to our left, however, about fifty-five years ago, it elevates, over a high parapet wall, and from green and glady lawns higher still than that, its unique and sober-

tinted front, flinging on the dim water the subdued reflections of its bulk, and of its surrounding foliage and grounds;—the gentle stream, stealing and disappearing to our right, round a grassy promontory, studded with beautiful trees. The placid smoothness of the river is formed, in this place, by a semicircular weir over which the water now comes towards you, first, with a slight fall, then foaming, then less rudely broken, and at last, again subsiding into a glassy stillness, which reflects the sunny sky; but it is a second time obstructed by a barrier similar to the former one, and hurries out of your view, in noise, bubble and confusion. The blue-slated houses of the town are directly before the eye; the monotony of their appearance taken away by that of the luxuriant foliage, in which they seem embowered; and the elegant, though fantastic cupola of the town-house, the steeple, (now a taper spire,) of the prin-

cipal church, and the mitred and ivy-covered castles of ruined monasteries rising up over them, or among them, further and peculiarly relieve the naked idea of a mere ordinary haunt of men. Our feudal building bounds, as has been said, our picture to the left; an old cathedral, with its adjacent mysterious round tower, both peering high above clumps of noble lime-trees, performs the same office to the right; and then the sloping meadow land rising to you from the near bank of the river, and in the month of May, always adorned with hedge-rows of flowery thorn; the cultivated grounds ascending and extending on all sides of the valley, through which wanders our lovely river; and the frame-like line of hills, that surround almost the whole of the view, some near and distinct, some more remote and misty, and others, at a great distance, towering into bold blue mountains—This is our promised

sketch, from memory. From treacherous memory—now fast beginning to refuse—(we are sure of it, after our vague attempt,) to do justice, even a general justice, to those features of places where childhood has run riot and happy, which youth has observed and appreciated with poetical fondness, and which contain spots where moulder hearts of love and goodness, and gentleness—the hearts of old! — ah, dreamy life! — ah, dreamy, dreary, life!

But, to our business. The brow of this steep descent of road, upon which we have been standing, certainly commanded the most attractive view of our city. This is one eulogy for it. But every thing, in this imperfect world, has its advantages and its disadvantages; and we cannot praise our point of sight on another account. It was, in truth, a very uncomfortable spot to live upon, during the rougher seasons of the

year. No matter from what point of the compass the wind blew, whether from the gloomy south, hurrying along with it the black rack, sur-charged with vapour and rain; or from the boisterous north, whirling before it sleet, or hail, or frost; or from the pinching east, scattering the snow-flake; or from the south-west, sputtering forth a hurricane; it was all the same. Every blast was sure to avail itself of this passage into the town, and hence the place obtained the appellation of the Wind-gap; a name it still holds, and must retain, until the various currents of air cease to whistle, to howl, to puff and to bluster, from each nook and corner of the earth's atmosphere.

Uninviting, however, as the situation may appear, a range of thatched houses, stretched up and over the ascending road; and, at the time of which we speak, in greater numbers than even at the present day. Why very sensible people should have chosen

Wind-gap as an abode, we are not exactly aware. Perhaps they were willing to set off the salubrity of their air, during some parts of the year, against its roughness during others. However this may be, the inhabitants of Wind-gap were attached to their boisterous suburb; they even boasted that it conferred the rare gift of longevity; for if their blasts chilled, they also braced; and, indeed, the place could number more aged inhabitants than any other outlet, even of a city proverbial for "air without fog."

But the winter had now gone by; the spring too, had passed over, and mid-summer was shedding its full effulgence on the good people of Wind-gap; and this latter is the time of the year at which we choose to make the reader better acquainted with the more important personages among them.

It was the eve of the twenty-fourth of

June, about fifty-five years ago. All Irish readers pretty well know that it has been the practice, time immemorial, of the humbler classes, to kindle, upon this night, bonfires throughout the country. We have read many learned discussions touching the origin of this custom; notwithstanding which, and contrary indeed to the nature of the theme, or at least, of its object, we have been left as much in the dark as ever. Whether the lighting of bonfires on St. John's Eve be a remnant of Pagan rites, by which our ancestors sacrificed to the palpable deity of the earth, the dispenser of light and heat; or whether it be a custom of more recent origin, we honestly admit, we cannot say; nor shall we pause to submit any grave and erring surmises on the matter; the people themselves, who are the actual incendiaries on those occasions, can give no rational account of the meaning of what they do.

corded, the bonfire upon its height was brilliant beyond comparison; and honour, indeed, its inhabitants expected, and received, from the circumstance; a reflected glory proportioned to the magnificence of their conflagration. Many battles had been fought between "the boys of Wind-gap," (and the elderly men were termed boys, along with the rest,) and other boys of other outlets, for necessary materials. In all such rencounters, the former had been victors, dragging up with shouts of victory, to the top-most point of their high ground, abundance of every thing required for a bonfire of gigantic dimensions.

The long-wished-for evening fell. The pile was heaped, the brand was applied to it, and as its flames shot up, "even into the shkie," young and old, man and woman, maid and widow, boy and girl, and child of each sex, sent after it a cloud-cleaving shout of exultation.

At this crisis of the mystical festivity, a fellow, uncouthly swathed from his neck to his heels in twisted straw ropes, wearing a ridiculous mask, and wielding a stick, with a puffed bladder tied to its extremity, flapped and banged his way through the truly motley crowd with as much agility as his cumbrous clothing would permit; indeed he resembled a great half-tamed dancing bear. He was followed by another man of proportions as muscular as his own, fantastically dressed in female attire, also wearing a foolishly terrific mask, and armed in the same manner as his supposed protector. This absurd pair dashed through the shouting throng, dealing indiscriminately their blows on every head, which blows, like the words of a loudly babbling tongue, were more noisy than mischievous. The people, however, half of their own accord, ran here and there, pursued by their two grotesque sergeants at arms, until the active police of Wind-gap had ranged

them to their satisfaction. After a little time, order was restored and the proceedings of the night went forward with official regularity.

At one side, where a line of temporary benches covered with green sods had been erected for the occasion, sat the more aged portion of the men of Wind-gap. Squatted on the ground below them, were ranged, dressed in their best high-cawled caps, and holiday garments, the as elderly females of the principality. Half-a-dozen of sycamore chairs, placed near to the benches, were occupied by as many grey-headed, sage-looking and very old men; and opposite to those gathered the promiscuous group of every inferior age or degree (for age meant degree) of the dwellers of the place.

The foolish fellow armoured in straw, and the swaggering unfeminine would-be female, his companion, strided up and down, pummelling all who did not assume, at least,

attitudes and faces of the required gravity; at the same time that their own grotesque tricks abundantly caused the loud merriment they affected to discountenance. The glare of the bonfire shot in between the seated old men and women and the confronting throngs, so that the faces of all glowed like heated metal, while their backs remained in black shadow.

The mumming fool in straw approached the old men seated on the chairs, flourished his stick with its appendage, struck the latter against the ground, and attempted a few unwieldy movements. An aged man arose and came forward:—

"Neighbours all, both the ould and the young o'ye, listen to the words from my mouth. The fire is blazing for the midsummer; the eve of St. John's day is come round to us agin, praise be given above for the blessin' of another year; and we are behouldin' to choose a Mayor of Wind-gap,

for the year that's afore us. Fifteen mid-summer nights are come and gone since the same man first had the Mayorship of rule and sway over us; and to this hour he has kept the pace an' the christian good-will inside our dours, and outside our thrasholds; quashing down scrimmages, and 'ructions, an' makin' a settlement of all our quarrels, an' keepin' us out of the law of the town below there, that might bring the * *Meeroch* on us, if we had any thing to do with it. Honest neighbours, that hearken to me, my word goes for it, that a more honester or a more worshipfuller Mayor, nor Maurteen Maher, could'nt hould the sway on Wind-gap."

Like other reporters of popular oratory, we might have broken up this speech with many parenthetical cheers; for the spokesman and his subject are as much favourites

* Ill-luck.

of ours as any other public speaker ever has been, in the eyes of our brethren. We think, however, that we have better managed, and that we now show more real art by keeping our whole volley of hurrahs for the close of the oration; and by declaring in strict truth, that the air was rent, after our friend sat down, with shouts of every calibre. The next instant Maurteen Maher was re-elected mayor, as popes are sometimes chosen, by acclamation.

Maurteen had been seated on one of the sycamore chairs before spoken of; he now stood up; the oldest man of the assembly, one indeed almost bent double with age, came to his side, and placed a long osier wand, peeled white, in his worship's right hand.

"Will you make promise before the neighbours to be the honest, fair judge among us, and to dale out the thrue justice on Windgap hill?" queried his ancient installer.

"I'll do my duty, like a thrue honest man," answered Maurteen Maher.

"Neighbours, do ye make promise to be loyal and dutiful to your mayor?" demanded the same aged person of the assembled crowd.

"Loyal and dutiful," shouted all.

"The chair, the chair!" was now the cry.

A large, two-armed, wicker chair was brought forward. To its sides were nailed loops of leather; through these, strong poles were put: with much gravity of manner, Maurteen Maher took his seat, clutching in his right hand his long wand of office, and in the other a huge nosegay. His subjects seized the poles, mounted them on their shoulders, and, preceded by a piper and a fiddler, the Mayor of Wind-gap was thrice borne round the bonfire, to which, during his progress, many faggots of furze, innumerable cows-horns, half the trunk of a goodly tree, and the entire skeleton of a horse, were added, for the purpose of conferring a kind

of glory upon his inauguration, as well as of exciting the new and excelling shouts which attested it.

The mayor's chair was then placed on a turfy eminence raised above the grassy bench before described; a foaming brown pitcher of home-brewed ale was handed to him; he quaffed it, wishing the "*shadhurth," to all around him; and then the vessel was passed on, of course after having been replenished, while each prayed a long reign for their newly and indeed curiously elected civic magistrate.

Maurteen Maher arose, and, amidst all this half farcical, half serious scene, profound silence ensued.

"It is in the knowledge of all o' ye, neighbours," said he, "that sence the first time ye made me Mayor of Wind-gap, 'tis my rule to chuse my council, that wid their

† Good health.

help, I may give good advice to ye, on hard points; and the same council that I called the first year o' my Mayorship, I'll call this present year; and so, Shawn Leeach, and Gregory Roche, take your places."

Shawn Leeach, the very old man who, as it may be said, had sworn in the Mayor, and Gregory Roche, one not much younger, very demurely took their stations, the one at his right hand, the other at his left.

"Shawn Leeach and Gregory Roche," continued Maurteen, "ye are the Mayor's council for the year to come; and no man is to gainsay our judgments, upon the peril of being put out of good fellowship with his neighbours. Come before my face, Meehawl O'Moore."

The hitherto merely foolish fellow, in the case of straw, waddled towards his worship's chair.

"Meehawl O'Moore, I put you in the post of the Mayor's bailiff; I give you the

power to disthrain and to make disthress, under the ordher of the Mayor's Coort of Wind-gap;—are ye all content, and do ye know your own minds, this St. John's Eve—that Meehawl O'Moore should have this place over ye, by ordher o' the Coort?"

It was curious that the boisterously inclined crowd wore really serious faces, while they affirmatively answered to this question.

"Well, then," rejoined Maurteen, "my hearty neighbours, let the dance go on, and the **Shannauchs* be tould, and let the good Sheebeen be dhrunk, till the fire burns down, and the †colloch's hour comes. Meehawl O'Moore keep the ring reg'lar; keep the gorsoons on their good beha'ver to the calleens; keep the *Sheebeen* rangin' its rounds in rason; let no one pass the gap widout payin' the ‡towl; if there's any unruly

* Agreeable gosssip. † Old woman's hour.
‡ Toll;—toll for the bonfire.

doin's or pickin' of quarrels, or any undacent conduct, bring the offendher before me; and so, neighbours, *Sha-dhurth* to ye agin; and hearty and prosperous may we all be, man, woman, and child, ould and young, until St. John's eve comes round to us the next year."

The Mayor took another willing draught; new cheers were given at the close of his harangue; more faggots and other combustibles were thrown on the fire; the piper and the fiddler, preceded and followed by the "boys and girls," adjourned to an adjacent level spot, under the clamorous direction of Meehawl O'Moore; and the dance quickly commenced with all the life and vigour for which Irish "boys and girls" are so justly celebrated.

Maurteen Maher possessed his osier armchair in quiet dignity; his council placed their lesser chairs at his right and at his left; the other old men, and all the old

women, took their former stations; the *weenocks* sat in a ring round the blaze, and began plays suitable to their age; whilst over the whole Maurteen kept his eye of authority, ordaining order, encouraging amusement, talking "Shannachs;" occasionally tasting his sheebeen; commanding that the same beverage should moisten the piper's chanter, rosin the fiddler's bow, give to the dancers' feet spirit for their pastime, and—(superfluous injunction!) oil the well-practised tongues of the old women seated near his chair.

We end the chapter by insinuating that this local and absurd practise of electing a "Mayor of Wind-gap," is only taken from the traditional authority of the place, (which however must not be questioned) and can by no means apply generally to the peculiarities of the Irish people.

CHAPTER III.

MAURTEEN MAHER was a man between fifty and sixty; an old bachelor, and otherwise unburthened with family cares. During his whole life he had never devoted himself to any regular occupation, and yet he was decently independent by his cleverness in many ways. He could weave baskets, and *skeechs* and *kishes;* he cultivated a small garden of osiers, to supply him with materials for this branch of his handy-craft; the shee-

been, brewed from malt of his drying, had a peculiar and highly-relished flavour; he was an eminent ornamental thatcher; he could mend shoes, make fishing-nets, and fishing-flies and lines, and do an odd job as a carpenter; he could turn wooden trenchers, *thurgeens*, or *caulcannon-pounders, and such household furniture; and he professed many other branches of artisan accomplishments.

Yet to none of his avocations would he continuously or diligently devote himself; he took up all by fits and starts, and would often abandon them altogether, when the spring-breeze invited him to the river-side, to pursue his favourite recreation of angling. Of this sport he was passionately fond; and in the successful pursuit of it, not one of his fishing brethren, who frequented the banks of the clear stream, which flowed

* A mess of potatoes and other vegetables.

through the valley, beneath his hill, could compete with Maurteen. His varied talents necessarily claimed respect, and Maurteen himself was by no means backward in assuming among his compeers an air of self-importance, proportioned to their admissions of his superiority. He possessed, however, a shrewd understanding, and, as the neighbours said, had "dacent manners and a handy tongue in his head." Such had been his admitted character from youth to manhood. As he advanced in years, he became still more looked up to. On all knotty points his opinion was consulted, and gradually became decisive of the matter at issue. This homage half spoiled Maurteen; a real dictator-ship of manner grew upon him. He claimed the foremost place in all discussions, no matter upon what subject; domestic, as regarded Wind-gap, or foreign as regarded "the town below," and which he was pleased to consider as a mere appendage to his own

dominions. Sometimes, his loud and oracular delivery of himself became ridiculed, but he looked superciliously on the scoffers, and turned his back on them, as quite unworthy of notice.

Maurteen monopolised, among other things, the management of bonfires, of May-bushes, of May-poles, and of all such illustrations of periodical festivities. Once, upon a St. John's eve, while the bonfire blazed brightly, partly as a frolic of the moment, and partly as a real acknowledgment of his great talents and efficient services, the "boys of the place" took him upon their shoulders, pranced under him round it, and appointed him to the mock office of Mayor. But Maurteen Maher's face was the only one which wore no smile on the occasion; and it was soon perceived that he took the freak more seriously than it had been intended.

His people were surprised to find, that

after this night, he poked himself more actively than ever into all their disputes and slightest differences; arrogating, by virtue of his recent appointment, the exclusive right of deciding between them. And at first they indulged the usurpation "for the fun of the joke," at the same time being obliged to admit that Maurteen's verdicts often saved them from law-suits in the town, and from internal feuds and bickerings. At the next bonfire, (but now as much by matter of course as to renew the frolic) he was re-installed in office;—and for this occasion, his own hands had constructed an awful-looking wicker chair—the same in which, fifteen years after its manufacture, we have just seen him paraded round the fire. And it was now that he called upon the two most intelligent men of his neighbourhood to assist him with their advice in the dispensation of his authority, and these he styled "the Mayor's council." He also ap-

pointed a bailiff to carry his and their decrees into effect; and thenceforward, without a sneer, or a witticism against him, even from the most witty, or the most sneering, Maurteen Maher obtained power, and preserved peace and good-will among his subjects. If a debt were owing from one to another, he arranged the time and manner of its payment; if the boundaries of a garden were disputed between two neighbours, a matter frequently occurring on an almost unclaimed common, where no fences, nor other lines of partition, had previously been established, he called in "his council;" with them viewed the premises, and pointed out to each claimant his decreed portion. If trespass were committed by swine or cattle, he assessed the damages perpetrated—and all his judgments were at last acceded to, not only submissively, but pleasureably; the good people of Wind-gap agreeing among themselves that a man of clearer

intellect, of more superior genius, or of more impartial justice, could not preside over their affairs; and it became a matter of course that his decisions were implicitly obeyed, much to the diminution of the fees of the real Mayor's office, legally established in the city about half-a-mile distant.

If fines or debts were to be recovered under his authority, and that payment was not forthcoming, he never failed to exact it. Meehaul O'Moore, his bailiff, was a ranting, rattling, laughing fellow, who obeyed the Mayor's orders for the joke' sake, careless of consequences. He would seize on some piece of household furniture, and carry it to his Worship the Mayor, who retained it until it was redeemed. And another thing may have confirmed Maurteen in his authority: namely, that the whole community which he thus usurpingly governed, felt and acknowledged his general utility, in handy-craft pursuits, much too convincingly, each

in his own bosom, to offend even a public tyrant, if such Maurteen Maher could have been, at the risk of getting rid of the advantages resulting from his individual talents.

His worship had shewn good discrimination in the choice of his council; Gregory Roche was the weaver of Wind-gap. Fifty-six years ago, the woman who neglected to commence the manufacture of the linen of her own household would have been deemed an unthrifty person. In every dwelling the buzz of the spinning-wheel was heard during the long winter-nights; and it was the companion of the *vanithee* in the open air, outside the door, on a summer's evening. The weaver was therefore kept in good and respectable employment, and could live rather aristocratically. But, along with the consideration due to him, as an expert and cunning artist, Gregory Roche commanded deference as a man of superior manners and acquirements. He had read books, and was

considered oracular on all grand historic points. Polemic literature he had also studied—we rather fear, however, only on one side; but he could relate "how King Harry had set up the Protestant religion—became the Pope of Room, (the Heavens be his bed!)—put his face totally agin the notion of letting the baste have more nor five wives at a turn"—and he would add with a knowing wink—"that the one o' them was one too many." It was clear, according to Gregory's Church History, that "becase the bould King Henry the Aigth was a skhandle to christian people, in regard o' the famale women, he gave to the sort o' clargy livin' in his time, ache a wife a-piece, and maybe sometimes more, according to his own fancy, just that they should'nt be bringing himself over the coals for his own doin's." While pointing to the ruined monasteries of which we have elsewhere spoken, in the town under his residence, Gregory

Roche could speak, whether truly, or romancingly, we know not, of the different orders of regular brethren who once inhabited them—(after having built them by the way), in their full glory; and he could expatiate on their former palmy state, compared with their present unheeded decay. Gregory's person was neat, and spruce, arrayed in snuff-coloured broad-cloth, a wig of three buckles, a well-brushed, three-cocked hat, and square-toed brogues. On all occasions, when the Mayor of Wind-gap sat recognized in full office, in his grand wicker chair, Gregory sat at his left hand; and it is worth adding, that he was the collector of "the dues" of the Priest of his parish, as well as the Mayor's treasurer for whatever resulted from importunately assailing, in the persons of hundreds of ragged deputies, all passengers going and coming along the Wind-gap road, for contributions to the anniversaries of St. John's eve, May-day, and so forth.

The man sitting upon his Worship's right hand, was, as has been said, the most aged man in the parish; the oldest of his neighbours, under him, scarcely remembered him with any other but a grey head; at present that head was white as snow, and his venerable hairs fell in great profusion on his shoulders. Hence the people called him Shawn Leeach, that is Grey Jack, although he had been christened John Morrison.—His years were said to be one hundred and ten, yet his intellect was strong, and his memory unfaded. He took great pride in walking to Mass on Sundays, the wrist of one hand clasped by the fingers of the other, and both resting upon the small of his back, accompanied by a great-grandson and two of his children, and a great-grand-daughter, of marriageable years. The image suggested to us by the appearance of this group has, we fear, often been used; yet we will venture to say that, to a poetic mind, our

old friend and his companions might give the idea of blooming Spring, mature Summer, with its fruit, and hoary winter, for the once in company.

CHAPTER V.

After having delivered the good humoured injunctions we have last reported of him, Maurteen Maher sat in state, his council at either hand. His upper house (we take the liberty so to denominate all the remaining old men of Wind-gap) collected around him; and his lower house, in the persons of the ancient dames of his realm, squatted on the ground before him; and, however wide may appear the distinctions between these

humble assemblies and those of the estates of the nation, yet was there some degree of similarity. It is needless to observe that Maurteen Maher, such as we have sketched his character, may answer sufficiently well to shadow forth some royal personage; compared with their contemporaries of the other sex, the old men were sententious and grave and imposing, and properly alive to the superiority of their nature, and should therefore be classed as the aristocracy of Wind-gap; and as for the old women, they so far resembled "the people's house," that, whatever they lacked of the hereditary sapience, the dignified demeanour, and the natural station claimed by the lords of the creation, they made up for, by an infinite disproportion of incessant gabble.

All these good folk sat fully within the influence of the bonfire's blaze; and while the boys and girls danced merrily away at some distance, the note of the music which

set them capering came pleasantly to the ears of the old people. It should be noticed that, contrary to the usage in higher quarters, king, lords, and commons, sat within speaking distance of each other; all mingling in general shannauchs, except when two or three individuals chose to have a bye-word. Nay, they quaffed their sheebeen in common; the same mug being sent from the throne to the lords, and from the lords to the commons, also, whenever the ancient throats of the last-named assembly became thirsty from smoking their pipes, or their tongues parched from clacking.

"What **pishe-rogue* story takes the rounds among ye, †*shanav granvh?*" asked his worship the mayor, addressing, in a condescending jocularity of tone, the seated matrons before him—"by the wagging of them heads

* Pishe-rogue, a tale of the supernatural.
† Shanav-granvh, old women.

of yours, and the long faces you're shaking at one another, I've a notion the discourse is runnin' on **Poochas*, or on some *Duowls* tricks of a stormy night."

"Merry Easther to me, Mayor of Wind-gap," replied one of the dames, "but tisn't you I'd fancy to have for masther of my house; oh no—; och, by no manes, *a roon*; why, a poor woman couldn't blink her eye but you'd be at the bottom of the story."—

"And if I was goin' to make an †*own-skuck* of myself, on that head, tisn't very clear to me I'd be troublesome to you, at all, Bridogue Mooney; I'd get a young colleen to comb my grey head, as the song says."—

"There is such combs as three-legged stools, to be found among the household furniture," smiled Gregory Roche.

"And the colleen that would take wid

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* Fairies. † Fool.

you would be at her last senses, though ye *are* the mayor itself," retorted Bridogue, "and she'd often be axing why you hadn't the *misnoch** to thry your hand when you were worth the having; though, to spake the honest truth, I believe that time is beyant your own recollection, asthore."

"Och, Bridge, that was'nt always your mind; do you lose the thought of auld times? but there's no use either in fretting or in telling on you; what's to happen will happen; and I say, with a hearty good will, much good may do the man that made his own o' ye!—but ye're not sayin' amin to me, Ned Mooney?"—he suddenly asked of Bridogue's mate who sat near him. Ned expressively and waggishly shook his old pate, turned up his eyes, took the *dudeen*† from between his teeth, and answered "Och! I was a blessed bargain to her, praise be to God!—

* Luck. † Short pipe.

and having said this, he replaced his *dudeen*, and tightened his teeth and squeezed his lips on it.

"But what would ye all do, only that I'm a bachelor boy?" continued the mayor, "and have no wife, like a mill-stone round my neck, to keep me from minding your concarns: is'nt it well for ye that I happen to hould the same belief wid the crature in the cart, as ye all know, 'tis in the ballad,"— and the mayor sang forth:

"There was a victim in a cart
A goin' to be hanged;
When his reprief came from the King
The cart and crowd did stand:
But he must either take a wife
Or be content to die.
"Och! why, then, should I keep my life?"
The victim did reply:
"There's people here from every place,
Why should I spile their sport?
The bargain's hard in either case—
But come! drive on the cart."—

To this not very elegant version of a not very original witticism, there was the contribution of what the author of "The Man of Refinement" considers a vulgar evidence of the feelings of human nature; namely, a laugh; accompanied by what is deemed not out of the way, in the boxes of the Italian Opera, namely, clapping of hands.

"Bridogue," resumed the mayor, "ye know ye were a comely crature, in the time we spake of, and used to dance, "cover the buckle," so as to take the light out of my eyes; and ye know, more betoken, that it's not my own fault that I'm a lone man, but because Ned Mooney was a claner boy; howsomever, as I said afore, or something like it, a pottle of frettin' doesn't sell for a groat."

Ned Mooney puffed forth a volume of smoke, which he had been inhaling during the mayor's last speech, and half laughed and half whispered, into his sovereign's ear,

"Mostha! bud ye were born with a silver spoon in ye're mouth to be quit of her!"

"Well, Bridogue," the mayor went on, "tell us what ye'were colloguing about; for our own discourse here is reeled off to the bare spindle."

"When ye said we were tellin' of duowl's doin's, Mayor of Wind-gap," answered Bridogue, "the guess ye made was almost the right one; we war talkin' about The Strange Man o' the Inch," she added in a low confidential and now serious voice, to which all who heard her, except Maurteen, responded with looks of almost frightened attention.

"And if I did'nt care much what I was sayin', I'd lay a wager you were givin' him a nice purty character?" smiled the mayor, with seeming indifference.

"Och! in honest truth, a good name is a bright jewel," remarked Bridge, unconsciously half quoting Shakespear, "and 'twould be the same pity to cock it up in the cap of

the strange man o' the Inch; and for the best o' rasons in the world, because he never cared for it, his own self."

"And what's ye're own notion about him, a-vanithee?"

"Sence ye have the likin' to hear to it, I'll rehearse it for you, what our notion is. We were a sayin' that, if ever there was a cloven-hoofed duowl, that pawned himself on people for a dacent-looking man—(though he *has* a little halt in his gait, too,)—and sich things happen oftentimes, they say—the sthrange man o' the Inch is just that sort of a body."

"'Twas well I did'nt pass my word for your civility to him, Bridogue."

"Och ay; and we were sayin' no more nor what his doin's give the warrant for; and there's more nor that; I'll make my words good agin him, or I'll give you lave and license to say I hav'nt such a thing at all as a tongue behind my teeth."

"Whatever way the story turns up, the mayor won't say that o' ye, any how," remarked the experienced Ned Mooney; "for if he took his oath of it on the mass book, there's another one livin' in Wind-gap could tell him what would give him his doubts, for all that."

"My speech is to pleasure the mayor, Ned Mooney."

"Faith, and sure I don't begrudge it to him; there will be enough left for us all." — Ned Mooney was a laughing philosopher, and jested with his misfortunes.

"Well, Bridogue," resumed the mayor, "we are longin' to know the rason why ye put hoofs on the strange man o' the Inch?"

Bridogue pulled down, with a sudden jerk, her petticoats over her shins; tucked all her clothes under her; shifted her position till she was poised to her satisfaction; stretched her hands towards the blaze and rubbed them well together; and smacked her lips,

and protruded her chin towards the mayor. Amongst her sister dames, similar movements were made to fix themselves confortably and lastingly in their sitting positions; most of the old men rested their chins upon their sticks, and bent themselves towards her, half smiling, yet staring inquisitively; the pipes of male and female were hastily replenished and vigorously relighted, as if to lay in sea-storage for a long and important voyage of gossip; and Bridogue then went on with her shannauchs.

"Isn't it a thing known to every one hearkinin' to me, that ever sence the doin's that happened there, down at the Inch, now more nor twenty years a gone, no crature, that was a livin' christhen at all, would go to live in that oold house;—becase the sperrit o' the lady that died in it, and the sperrit o' the young man, through whose manes the life left her, goes thrampaging through the rooms, by night; screeching

and sthruggling most frightful for to hear. Isn't that thrue for me, I'd be glad to larn ?"

This question, though put generally, was, after a pause, replied to only by Gregory Roche. "I b'lieve," he said, "there's no one you might ask about that house could tell ye more of it nor our mayor his own self."

"To be sure I could say something of it," observed the mayor, with a half laughing, unsuperstitious, superior kind of expression, "but I'll keep my knowledge to myself, Gregory Roche; and in the main time, for the rason that you are not tongue-tied, ye can tell the neighbours what happened to us both, the night we went to the Inch."

"I often tould all that came to my knowing about that night; so that 'twould be no story to any one," answered Gregory; and this was literally true; there were none present who had not heard of the visit paid by the mayor and his younger council to the abominated house of the Inch; and yet

such is the love of the marvellous, among people who purposely set themselves down to listen to a recital of it, that every voice cried out either that the circumstance had not been fully related, or that it had been quite forgotten: and an *encore* was loudly called for. A first singer could not have been more obliged than was Gregory Roche for the request made of him.

"Well, neighbours, well; 'twould'nt be a mannerly turn to say the No to ye, and so spile the discourse, when we are all sociable together of a St. John's eve. There's never a one here that's not ould enough to bring to mind when the house at the Inch was shut up, and the rason why its dours and windows were all boulted and barred."

"Och! and sure we do remember it well," interrupted Bridogue Mooney, snatching the narrative from Gregory's mouth, with as much eagerness as a starving dog might seize a bone from the jaws of another;

"myself has the whole story on the tip o' my tongue."

"Then tell it, Bridogue, in St. John's name," said the Mayor,—"you'll sleep the asier for it, and poor Ned will pass the night quieter; besides, you're so handy at the speech, Bridogue, that ye'll be at the end of your journey before Gregory could get to the first turnpike."

Bridogue gave her person a pert move, while Gregory smiled; but at the bottom of his appearance of complaisance, there was a gravelly sediment. The *raconteuse* started forward on her narrative, with an avidity that fully bore out the Mayor's assertion of her professional capacity; and taking the liberty to recur to our elegant simile of the riffed bone, her haste was doubled, at once to satisfy her own appetite, and prevent the possibility of a reprisal. Yet, first-rate as was esteemed Bridogue's gossipping talent, she committed, to our taste, so many

digressions from the main point—such a scaling of the genealogical tree of every creature mentioned in her *Shannauchs*—that we will endeavour to condense her matter, according to our own notions of the requisite compactness of story-telling.

The garrulous old body has fixed the period of her tale at twenty-one years, or thereabouts, previous to the time of its relation. At that epoch it was known to "all the world [the world of Wind-gap we presume she meant], that ould Harry Stokesbury," the proprietor of the house at the Inch, and of considerable property beside, "had been as wicked a sinner in his time as ever broke the commandments,"—that is, he had led a self-indulging, irregular life. It was equally well known that, like all *roués*, he had been an unreasoning tyrant to his family; and that when, from the inroads made on his constitution by excesses, as well as by years, he became no longer

able to pursue his former courses, he continued just as intolerant at home, as if he had been a voluntary ascetic.

To his only son, the "young Harry Stokesbury," now a man, in the prime of youthful vigour, and who shewed every propensity to follow the example given him by his sire, he was, with a most ungenerous want of sympathy, particularly severe and oppressive; fuming, and cursing, and raving at his imitator's follies and crimes. But the younger Harry, laughing at the idea that his father, the most thorough-going rake of his own day, should turn moralist upon him, merely in spite that his descendant could eclipse him, took little heed of the parental lectures thus lavished upon him; in fact, it was visible to every one that Henry the second had resolved to prove himself "a chip of the old block," whatever the old block itself might choose to think about the matter. But the "ould fellow" began to

keep a firmer gripe of his money than he had hitherto done: "Like the dog in the manger," thought his son, "he can't use it himself, and won't give it to those who can." Young Stokesbury soon wanted, in fact, the means of pursuing what he called his pleasures; in consequence of unsatisfactory payments, people began to refuse him new credit, and to become troublesome to him about old scores. He sent them all to his father (after first sending them all to the devil,—"and there's little in the difference" remarked young Harry to himself). "Ould Harry" ordered them, however, to be chased off his premises; and some, who insisted strongly on their claims, were compelled, in consequence, to fight their way to the high-road, through two or three house-dogs, and four or five servants—glad to escape without very material personal injury.

"The young fellow" inherited his father's passionate temper, as well as his taste for

pleasant pursuits; it was well known, indeed, that, in the first-mentioned instance, he even excelled his prototype; his torrent-like nature becoming quite turbulent and destructive when attempted to be curbed in its career. He demanded money from "the ould fellow," but not only got none, but was met with showers of oaths and vituperation. "The young fellow" recriminated as well as he knew how: and at the scenes of altercation which took place between them, and at the sound of their maniac voices, rising high in mutual and unbridled passion, every soul under the same roof with them shuddered.

"Well," (and here the reader must imagine Bridogue piquantly smacking her lips) "the young fellow" seized whatever he could lay hands upon, either in the shape of money, or of articles convertible into money, and rioted away as long as the supplies, so gained, lasted; but long they did

not last; and he was again in necessity; and another fearful contention took place between him and his unhappy parent; and another; and many others; (Bridogue's manner of relating these facts was solemn) until at their last interview, the father struck the son, and the son raised his sinewy arm, and felled his father to his foot; and from that day, until he got an unchristian grave under the waters of the sea, a curse fell upon and followed young Harry Stokesbury; nor did the listeners of Wind-gap see any thing extraordinary in this fact; for, to their primitive hearts, it seemed an immeasurable sin, that, even with provocation, the child should commit outrage on the person of the father.

It was reported at the time, as Bridogue asserted, that "the young fellow," after having fled the house, to escape death at the hands of his father, who, in his rage, armed himself with a weapon to inflict it, became very

sorry for his abominable act; and, when he had cooled, was penitent, and did all in his power to make peace at home. But "the ould fellow" would never set his eyes upon him; and at his dying hour left him nothing but his curse.

Still, according to our narrator, and indeed, the general credence of the country, the young man was as much to be pitied as blamed. To be sure, no one could help calling him wild, and wayward, and passionate; nor was it any very great wonder that he felt inclined to tread in the paths that had been well beaten for him by his father; yet, many good christians said that he was affectionate and generous, and Bridge insisted that to those below him, who wanted and claimed his assistance, he had shewn a liberality so extreme, that it almost atoned, in the world's eye, for his youthful indiscretions: she particularly instanced the following case.

While yet but a boy, he discovered a near relation of his deceased mother in the most abject distress. This person he instantly snatched from penury, called him his brother, and, at his intercession, the elder Stokesbury consented to receive the new comer as an inmate of his family. The lad was educated along with young Harry; ate with him; was clothed as well; sported with him; in fact, was treated, in every respect, as a brother, indeed.

The characters and even appearance and manners of the two youths were very dissimilar. Young Harry was a strong-featured, yet fine-featured, boy, with superabundant spirit; his poor cousin, so cherished, was as handsome, but mild looking, and with the expression of even a want of spirit upon his countenance; yet, Harry seemed to love him better because of this contrariety; it made him more positively the protector and patron of his timid relation.

"But smooth water runs deep, and the duowl lies at the bottom of it," was Bridogue's sage commentary on this soft seeming individual. Young Henry Stokesbury soon experienced cause to repent that he had ever rescued the lad from starvation. Old Stokesbury had under his roof a ward, an interesting young girl. Her dower, when she arrived at a disposeable age, was to be a large one, and her father had willed that she should espouse her guardian's son, on the promise that the guardian consented to the match. It was said that the young man loved most enthusiastically his betrothed bride; and no wonder that he should; for she was generally allowed to be beautiful; and, like the lamb, even too mild and gentle: the very opposite indeed, as was his cousin, to her intended husband.

Shortly after the deadly feud with his father, young Harry left his native place, and went, no one knew whither. Three

months after, his detesting parent died. It was generally supposed that, notwithstanding his father's will, and even curse, the disinherited heir would immediately return home to survey his chances of fortune. But, twelve months elapsed before Harry's re-appearance at the house of Inch, and then his visit was known by its consequences.

During his absence, it had become whispered about that the person whom, from early boyhood, he had cherished, had behaved most foully and treacherously to him; that he had inherited young Harry's paternal property; and that, for the accomplishment of his views, he had kept up the father's rage against the son, and that, therefore, the old man's curse had been his only legacy to his only child; but, worse than all this, rumour now told that the traitor was, at Harry's return, the husband of the beautiful and wealthy ward of Old Stokesbury.

As evidence to a jury, perhaps there

might have been nothing certainly proved on these points, but appearances bore out suspicions. The usurper lived in the Inch-House, and the fair young girl lived there with him, and the closest observers could only conclude that they were man and wife.

Upon a dark night, the house was attacked by a band of armed men, broken into, and at once given up to pillage. Harry Stokesbury's treacherous cousin fell, covered with wounds, inflicted by Harry's own avenging hand, near to the bed, on which lay his faithless mistress—a shrieking witness of this, perhaps, rightful retribution. The general story went, that she had become a mother only a few days before, and that, when the terrible young Harry, after his sanguinary deed, turned to her to reproach her with her infidelity, he found that, with her last, long scream, her young spirit had passed away.

While yet grimly standing over the bleeding and senseless victim of his revenge, he was seized upon and conveyed to prison. The authorities of the neighbouring town had received private intimation of the intended attack on the house at the Inch, and, although they had been too officially precautious, or perhaps lazy, to anticipate it, they at last sent overpowering numbers, to ensure to the law vengeance upon the law's aggressors.

The now only living Harry Stokesbury, arrested on the very scene of his crime, was tried at the bar of justice, and condemned to death. Yet, tremendous as had been the result of his rage, the provocations to it, according to general report, were mercifully taken into account, and eventually, he was only transported from his country;—transported from it, as soon appeared, never to reach the shores of another; for authentic intelligence reached Ireland that the ves-

sel in which he sailed, had foundered in open sea, and that all on board had perished.

Although, as the savage youth stood over the stiffening body of his relation, he had thought him dead, his victim lived on; and after twenty years and upwards, still continued to be a breathing man, upon the very evening of Bridogue's narrative; "lading, to be sure," added Bridogue, "a very quiet life, in the town at our feet—but who can forget, for all that, his airly villainy?"

CHAPTER IV

THE house at the Inch, thus marked by the assertions of Bridogue, and the assent of her neighbours, who, by the way, were the nearest populous community to it, as the scene of a hideous tragedy, had indeed been shut up and unoccupied for many years, until within the last three months, when it was taken by the object of the old woman's present animadversions. Bridogue closed her story with this remark :—

"An' its a thruth, afore ye all, that no right body would ever venter to go live in such a place, where the sperrits of Harry Stokesbury and the young woman, that died there, haunt the place the whole night long; an' if 'twas a thing," she added, "that the house at the Inch had never been a place of ill luck, or *Meeroch*, both the one and the other, were in it now, for it covered the head of the wickedest man the world ever gave birth to; not barrin' ould Harry Stokesbury, or even young Harry himself."

We have before surmised that all the assembled sages of Wind-gap, male and female, were well acquainted, previous to this night, with the story of Harry Stokesbury; but Bridogue was peculiarly remarkable for her powers of newly aranging and combining the incidents of a tale, no matter how often she repeated it; so that, even prolix as she had proved in the present

instance, none of her auditors seemed fatigued; on the contrary, throughout her narrative, and most emphatically at its conclusion, the old dame was greeted with various exclamations, of wonder, pleasure and applause; all which testimonies of her talents she accepted as matters of course.

One only of her auditors wore a face of indifference, on the occasion, and even ostentationsly displayed it; and this was Ned Mooney, the good dame's spouse, who quietly contented himself with ejaculating, "Thanks be to the blessed St. John, she has done!" It need not be observed, that this circumstance went most bitterly to Bridogue's heart; want of interest in any one is certainly the keenest offence the story-teller can receive; what must it be, when it comes from one's own husband?

Different remarks circulated among the old people, upon the matter under discussion; until at length it was recollected that

Gregory Roche had been interrupted in his modest attempt, to relate an anecdote, connected with the house at the Inch; and he was now requested, by all, to resume. It was not, however, an easy matter to prevail on the weaver of Wind-gap to take up the snapped threads of his intellectual loom; another artist had been publicly preferred to himself. But the Mayor knew the weak point of the man, and whispered him, that what had occurred, was only according to "good manners;" that, merely through gallantry, women must have their way, all the world over; that he was assured, Gregory Roche, whom everybody regarded, as the "patthern of Wind-gap, in regard of mannerly conduct," would not, for the first time in his life, be forgetful of "dacent behaver." Gregory was conciliated; and, when all were again fixed in attitudes of attention, the "patthern of Wind-gap," began his anecdote.

"All that the plasing vanithee, Misthress Mooney by name, tould to ye, neighbours, was a thrue story, and well reharsed over. Everybody said, after the house at the Inch was shet up, that sthrange cries used to be hard there in the night time, and sthrange lights seen in the upper windies. Misthress Mooney related for you that 'tis more nor twenty years sence the young woman died there; by coorse of nature, the Mayor of Windgap and myself were younger people that day than we are now at the present time, forenent ye; we had no Mayor at all over us then, more be token; Maurteen Maher was only Maurteen Maher, in them days. Well; Maurteen brought me down by the river side a-fishing, of a very fine evening, moreover, that would tempt any one to take a slope to himself by the green bank, where the flowers were blooming to the eye sight. Ye all know, neighbours, that the house at the Inch is near to the wather's side. We were a com-

ming our way home, and now and then we stopped in our discoorse, and turned our looks to the house, for we bethought ourselves of the story that was going; it was a good two hours after the night-fall.

"Says Maurteen Maher, to me, (remember he was only Maurteen Maher at that time neighbours, or I'd call him the mayor, to be mannerly)—'Gregory,' says he to me, 'as sure as the fishing-rod is in my hand, I see light in the top windy of the place'—and neighbours all, I looked myself, and light there was. We held our tongues for a while, like people sthruck with amaze; till at last, says Maurteen to me agin, 'Gregory, I'll see what's in the house, if 'twas the Duowl runnin' with his lantern through it; will you come with me?'

"No, Maurteen, no, I made answer to him; the heavens be our safeguard, we shouldn't meddle or make with things of that sort.

"'Come near to the house, Gregory Roche,'" Maurteen said to me. Myself demurred, good neighbours; myself demurred to Maurteen Maher; but he took me by the arm, and by main force brought me with him; for he was a sthronger boy nor I was.

"We got very near to the house; the light of the windies blazed brighter and brighter; and we hard, aye, as positive sure as I'm a livin' sowl, this St. John's eve, and as sure as the saint's good fire is burnin' before me, and as sure as ye are all hearkenin' to me, we hard a pitiful, doleful screech, that stopt us as if we were shot; 'twas like the screech of a woman in her sorest throuble; neighbours, neighbours, it was; only more dolefuller, by far, by far."

Gregory Roche here paused. It was not without intention that, with due solemnity of voice, shaking of his head, and impressive mysteriousness of visage, he had managed to bring his story to a certain pitch of in-

terest. To measure the success of his art, therefore, Gregory paused; and anon he grew pleased with his observations; the usual marks of deep sympathy with the narrator were fully displayed. Towards Maurteen Maher indeed, Gregory did not venture to direct his eye; for, as he had sometimes experienced before, he feared to find on the mayor's lip a half waggish smile; nor would he have been at present disappointed in his apprehensions; tho' perhaps his worship was only amused with his council's rhetorical decorations.

"Neighbours, neighbours," resumed Gregory, not yet quite satisfied with the strong impression he had made; "Maurteen Maher that was, and the mayor that is, will bear me out in what I say; it was indeed, it was a very mournful screech we heard."

"You're tellin' the story mighty well, Gregory Roche," said the mayor, "'twas plain to know that a livin' christhin couldn't

baul out that way, through his teeth, if they made a King of England of him."

"No, neighbours, no; not a livin' christhin sowl would screech that a way.

"'Come into the house, Gregory Roche,'" says Maurteen Maher, to myself, very wickedly.

"Into the house is it, Maurteen Maher?" —I made answer to him; and I shook my finger at him, the way I now shake it, neighbours; I did—I shook my finger at him.

"No, Maurteen Maher, says I, I will not darken the door-stone of that house; 'tis no place for honest, livin' people, says I to him.

"'I'll go by myself then,'" says Maurteen Maher, pushing me away from him. Didn't ye push me from you, Mayor of Windgap, that was Maurteen Maher then? didn't you?"

"I did in good troth," answered his worship, smiling quietly.

"Take my advice, says I to him, and I shook my finger at him again; take my counsel and don't enter there; lave the dead to their doom; to their doom, says I. 'I will go in, says Maurteen Maher, over again.' Neighbours, I was the image of one thunderstruck, by rason of his bouldness: there was no fear upon him: 'here is the fish and the fishing-rod,' says he, to myself—'it would be a pity to have them good throuts lost;' aye, indeed neighbours, all he seemed to think about was the losin' of the throuts. 'If they brake my bones, and that I can't come back to you,' says Maurteen, 'If I *don't* come back to you, in an hour's time, go home, Gregory Roche; go your ways home, and send the throuts to Mr. Kelsham at the gazebo; I promised them to him, and, dead or alive, I'll keep my word; send them to him, Gregory Roche, and make sale of this fishing-rod, and of every thing you'll find in my house, and give the money to the poor, for the good o' my soul.'

"I was amazed beyant the world, neighbours; I was like unto a body turned into a pillar of salt, after a manner; and while I was in this sort o' way, Maurteen Maher left me. He staid away near to an hour; and he came back with a sarious face, I'll pledge myself to ye, but what he seen he never tould of."

"Would ye have my face turn round to my back, Gregory, or would ye have me be withered into a *sthagown for letting my tongue run away with my brains?"

Gregory Roche was fully satisfied at perceiving that his contribution to the wonders of the night was well received, quite as well, indeed, as the more lengthened one of Bridogue Mooney, and therefore it did not come into his head to reply to the mayor's last observation. Many comments and surmises followed, which we will pass over, only noticing the more material topics.

* Sthagown, a frost-bitten potatoe.

"It was a thrue remark for Bridge Mooney to make," said a woman with a palsied head, every shake of which threw a very effective hiatus into her speech, "'tis mighty thrue for Bridogue Mooney to say that no right body would go to live in such a house as the house at the Inch."

"Right body, inagh!" cried Bridge, smartly, "He's no right body, as sure as I'm an auld sinner, he is not. I'm tould he's mighty ill-favoured to look on, and elderly into the bargain; and if he hadn't witchcraft on his side, is it to be believed that an auld ugly offender of a man, 'ud be able to over persuade so many young creatures?"

"I believe, beyant any doubt," observed one of the old men of the company, "that such sin and shkandle was never known to happen in a neighbourhood as fell upon the counthry round the Inch house, since the sthrange man came to live there."

"There was never the like known in the

world wide," answered Bridogue—"and if he was a sightly young blade, that'ud be plasing to the eye, and carried a coaxin' smile upon the lips, and had a sugary tongue in his head, there wouldn't be half the surprise; but take my word over again for it, it's by witchcraft, and witchcraft alone, he comes round them. Isn't Nelly Darcy, the smith's daughter, ashamed to shew her head? isn't there Doran's crature of a colleen, not over sixteen years auld, turned from the door by her own father and mother? and isn't there Mahony's wife, that wint by the name of purty Peggy, afore Tim Mahony brought her home.—(Tim Mahony ye know, keeps the sign of the "Tumblers" at the cross roads, beyant the Inch house) and wasn't she sent to her father, by rason of her husband's displeasure? and ochone! ochone!" continued Bridge pathetically, "the shkandle is brought on us all, on account of the unsightly auld man o' the Inch! I'tell ye, onst for all, he gives draughts to us all, some way or other."

"There's such things done of a certain," said auld Daddy Leeach, "every body can spake of what the *shoolin' Bacchos* * brings upon young cratures, by manes of bewitched pins, and heribs, and dhrinks, sweet and plasing to the mouth, though bitter for the heart, and bad for the poor sowl; and I knew in my time, sthrange things to be used for the makin' of the love draughts. They say that the young ones of them † *faulhogues* that flies through the air from the morning till the night, taken from the nest afore their feathers grows, and the nest they're found in taken at the same time—they say that if the bird, and nest, and all is biled up together for the wicked purpose, the broth it makes will force a girl to run after a boy, or a boy to run after a girl, for the mere love, the world over."

"Is it the swallows ye made mention of, Shawn Leeach," asked another very old man near him.

* Wandering beggars. † Swallows.

"Aye, in good thruth, Meehawl — 'twas about them swallows, the youngest of 'em, I mane, that I made mention."

"And faiks," resumed Meehowl, "the rason I put the question to ye, on that head, is this; very airly of a hazy morning, I was passin' by the house at the Inch—the Lord stand between us and all harm," and here the narrator piously crossed himself: "when what should I see, lookin' towards the house, but the sthrange man himself, standin' outside of a windy, and he was pullin' down a swallow's nest."

"And ye seen him doin' that, Meehowl? then its likely enough that Bridogue Mooney is right in her sayin'."

"I'll stand up for my sayin'," replied Bridge Mooney, "he puts the charms on us, howsomever he finds manes to do it."

"I'll tell ye what I hard of them swallows, neighbours," said Daddy Leeach: "them swallows and them birds, too, that goes by

the name o' willy wagtails, I'm tould for sartain has three drops o' the Devil's bloud in them, Lord be good to us."

"'Tis often and often I took notice of both kinds of them birds, the *foulhogues*, and the *spiddogue coppel;* the spiddogue coppel is never known to sing his varse of a song, only when the day is bitther could, and dripping wet; and then it's a mournful thing to hear him, and to look at him, standin' on a could wet stone, by the road side, and by the river side, liltin' his bit of a *croonawn*, and lookin' about him so 'cute, and waggin' his long tail, for all the world as if he gloried in the dark rainy-day, that puts a cloud over the mind of all christhin cratures; and them swallows, agin, they skim about, from the risin' to the settin' of the sun, and they never put foot to the ground like our own birds; but, when the storm is comin' to vex the earth, they all get in a row, together, upon an ould wall, or on the top of a body's house, and

they sing, and they sing, all of them at once, and as loud as ever they can, makin' merry at the doleful change, that's comin' on, and that they *know* is comin' on, more be-token, better nor the people themselves; and moreover there's not one among us can tell how they come here to Wind-gap, or where they come from, or where in the world they go to in the winter-time; and I often hard it said as well as our neighbour, Shawn Leeach, that the three dhrops o' the Devil's blood is in them, and in the willy-wag tails."

These comments on the recipe for the manufacture of love powders; the undeniable fact that the strange man at the Inch had been seen in the act of pulling down swallows nests; his morose and yet popular character (in a certain way); his want of personal recommendation, and yet his personal success; all this put together, left our lords and commons of Wind-gap in little doubt as to the means by which his indescribable triumphs

had been won. Nor, indeed, must we much wonder at the conclusion to which our good folks have arrived; for, according to their primitive ideas, nothing but witchcraft could account for the Turk-like sway of their abhorred neighbour; the want of good conduct in any one of the young girls of their community being looked upon as a kind of mysterious visitation.

It was, however, mentioned that, sometimes when by chance his charms ceased to influence, the strange man of the Inch did not stop short of secondary, human means. A tale of violence was added, according to which the precincts of the garden of the Inch house was looked upon as banned and unholy ground, although the hero had been disguised beyond the possibility of recognition. On all hands, it was admitted that the strange man o' the Inch had "a sort o' look," a baneful, baleful look, which, if it once rested on a comely girl of any rank, ensured

her eventual perdition, or was to be averted only by a miracle. In fact, Bridogue Mooney clearly made out her proposition, which had opened the conference round the bonfire, namely, that, "the sthrange man 'o the Inch was a cloven hoofed duowl, passin' himself for a dacent elderly man."

We extract from bye conversations of our good friends of Wind-gap some assertions that did not tend to set up the character of the subject of their *shannauchs*. It was vouched that the only person known to live with him was a wrinkled haggard woman; and yet many figures were seen after twilight going to the house and coming from it; and at hours of the night, when well conducted people ought to be at rest, that uproarious rioting was known to continue under his roof till day-break. "Boys of the neighbourhood" had once been venturous euough, during one of these commotions, to approach the premises. It was very dark, and they

were moving stealthily onward, when suddenly they heard a fearful, hellish shout; the lights, they had previously seen so vivid within the house, became extinguished; before they had time to advance, or recede, each in his consternation was seized, as all averred, by a "horned Divil," for the group was young and strong, and could not otherwise have been so overcome; and, thus mastered, they were urged supernaturally along, "in sich a hurry, that they had'nt time to bless themselves;" until they arrived at the river's bank, which as has been mentioned, flowed near the house; and into the river they were plunged, and out of the river they barely escaped, although good swimmers, with the wise resolution never again to oppose earthly prowess to fiendish agency.

"Be him a sinful christin, bought and sould, or be him a duowl in earnest, may the heavens keep him from our road," ejaculated Bridogue Mooney.

"Amin, and amin over agin, gossip," assented the dame, with the pendulating head; "from evil doin's, and evil doers, the Lord deliver us!"

A rather violent stir here took place, among the dancers at a little distance; and six or eight stout young fellows, heralded by the man of straw, and his Herculean helpmate, dragged towards the Mayor's chair two individuals wearing large outside coats, and broad-brimmed hats. As the parties confronted the judgment seat, hat and cloak were torn from the person of the foremost culprit; and, almost in the middle of the gossip, which had occupied itself about him, "the sthrange man o' the Inch" stood fully in view. His *nom de guerre* was shouted by more than one voice, and immediately those who had held him loosed their grasp; and he stood in the blaze of the fire, laughing loudly at the ludicrous confusion which his presence created.

Among the old women, there ensued a hidious discord of screams, and they tumbled over each other, in their hasty, though not successful, attempt to avoid the neighbourhood of one whom they themselves had magnified into a very formidable being; and, in a few seconds, those amongst them who could run, ran with all their might, and those who could only hobble, hobbled with all their energy; Bridogue Mooney leading the cohort, with the loudest screams offended virtue could put forth, while at each inch of their way over Wind-gap hill, every echo of his devilish laugh added impetus to the hearts and heels of the scandalized fugitives.

The strange man of the Inch, now that he could be really looked upon, seemed to be about forty-five; though he might be less, for his face, that is, as much of it as was fully visible, had become disfigured by ugly gashes, which probably added to it an

appearance of age. Over half of his features he wore a black handkerchief; and of the one eye left exposed, scarce any thing worse than power and brilliancy of expression could be conjectured. An air of lofty command ran through his bearing. He was clad in a full skirted coat of blue cloth, richly laced; a vest of embroidered silk, a small-clothes of blue plush, and silk stockings, and square-toed shoes, with silver buckles in them.

After the retreat of the old women, his shocking laughter suddenly settled into a bold imperious manner, and his single observable eye flashed fiercely, and his brow knit deeply above it, as he looked on every side at the gaping crowd.

"Come, make way here, fellows," he said, "I have a strong inclination to punish a score or two of you, for your rough handling, now that you have dared to rob me of my cloak and hat; make way I say, or I will

score some ugly marks on your foolish faces;" and he tapped the short crooked sword at his side.

All the old men around Maurteen, and all the young people who had followed from the place of the dance, were receding to make way accordingly, when Maurteen Maher clutched his osier-wand, and, sitting very upright in his chair, cried out in a sonorous voice—

"Stop! stop awhile, genteel, and give an account of yourself."

The strange man of the Inch turned suddenly round, and glared at the questioner.

"Yes," resumed Maurteen, "I'd have a word or two wid ye, afore ye lave our place."

The summoned person was evidently much surprised and offended at this interruption. He walked rapidly over to his worship, fixed a stern look upon him, was

silent for an instant, and at last, burst forth in a question :

"Who the devil are *you*, that stops *me*?"

Maurteen Maher did not wince before the strange man of the Inch. He held his head loftily, and his tone was bold without being arrogant, as he answered,

"*I* am the Mayor of Wind-gap, far above the Mayor of the town below us; as you may larn by lookin' on the hoight of this place, and how low the town lies at our feet."

"Take your foolish mummery to some other market, you old ridiculous Irish fellow:" said the strange man of the Inch, again vehemently turning to go away.

"There's no mummery about me," said Maurteen. "I govern the people here by their own free will and consent; and I govern them for their good."

"You're an old grey-headed idiot, I take it; and ye look d—d impertinently at

me, and I've half a mind to change your tone," continued the "sthrange man."

"Tisn't by fighting with the swoord, I should be able to rule over my neighbours; but for all that, I'm not afeard o'ye, as wicked as they say ye are, and as fierce as your one eye burns upon me; so you need not lay your hand upon your crooked hanger; the odds o'the battle 'ud be agin' ye; but I don't want any thing but pace and quiet. Listen to me; I'm tould ye said evil words into the ear of a young girl at the dance, and put your arms round her, when she did'nt want them, and for that offence on Wind-gap, you are brought before me, the Mayor. It is time for you to give over fooolish and sinful notions and behaver. The snow of age has not fallen on your locks as thick as it has upon mine; but still I'd have you be thinkin' o' your grave. 'Tis a shkandle to us on Wind-gap to see a middle-aged man runnin' the race o' the wicked; and I

say to you, repent o'your sins, and larn to be a christhin."

This magnificent address, though full of never-to-be-forgotten morality, to the ears of Maurteen's neighbours, seemed to strike the "sthrange man" as something eminently ridiculous. He burst into a renewal of his former fit of laughter, and hurried, now unobstructed, from the presence of his lecturer.

The chief offender's companion had stood apart during the scene we have described; he moved after his principal.

The Mayor advanced hastily towards him, seized his cloak, suddenly dragged it open and glanced into his face; it was but a momentary view he could have gained of the person's features, who recoiled, and drew his disguise closer round him. But there were others besides the Mayor who imagined they had recognized the second domino, as will soon be seen.

"I had a notion who was hid under that cloak," said the Mayor privately to this individual.

"I promised to stand your friend, and 'twas plain to me, and now 'tis plainer than ever, that a friend you will want to give you help when you are not thinkin' you need it. Poor boy! I hard it long ago, and I b'leve at present that there is a doom upon you, and that ye must work your way through it. Go then, in heaven's name, and face it. I'll keep my word to you all the same; the Mayor of Wind-gap *will* be your friend."

The person he addressed hastened away in the path of the strange man of the Inch, as if glad, like him, to be freed of Maurteen's sermons.

It was some time before the sensation, created by this commotion at the bonfire, became appeased. Little bare-legged scouts were sent out after the old women, who slowly returned, upon the strongest assur-

ances, on the part of the Mayor, of their personal safety. Terror may be an impulse, particularly acting upon the delicate constitution of the nervous female system; but above even terror, is to be ranked the nervous curiosity of the softer sex; so that, according to these two rules, the old sisterhood of Wind-gap may be permitted, after the allaying of their mortal fright, to reassemble once more round the bonfire, and its sovereign. Nay, they even squatted down again on the very spot they had lately abandoned, brim-full, every one of them, of most fruitful subjects of conversation. Above all other things, the Mayor's bold and magisterial bearing drew forth their unlimited eulogy; and we suspect that Maurteen had intended it should have produced such an effect; at all events, he felt his character to be considerably elevated this night, in the eyes of his subjects.

His worship continued calmly to preside over the renewed gossip, and answered in good-humoured loftiness to the adulation showered upon him. And we believe that the old women of Wind-gap could have remained for a week sitting on their heels, so highly did they relish the music of each other's tongues, had not the Mayor reminded them that the hour for the display of their activity was come; at which intimation, the aged belles and the grey-headed beaux of his jurisdiction joined hands, and, forming a circle, set to dancing with all their possible agility, round and round the glimmering remnants of the bonfire; those who could boast the greatest strength of limb supported others whose sinews refused to bend with sufficient flexibility, and whose joints had become rusty in their sockets. In this career of crippled movements; in the grey locks set floating by their motion; and in the wrinkled visages of the perform-

ers, there was a semblance more to a crowd of witches and wizards, enjoying the seething of their spells in a cauldron, than to that of earthly people, engaged in an earthly pastime; while the Mayor, with his white wand presiding over the rite, was no unfit representative of the requisite enchanter, and while the grotesque figures of Meehawl O'Moore, and of his gigantic mate, might be interpreted into two very ungainly imps, attending upon him.

When the red embers had been nine times encircled by the new dancers, each crone secured a portion of them, and took it carefully home, as one security against charms for the ensuing year; and we may safely close this chapter with the assertion that they all wended towards their beds heavily laden with the shannauchs and occurrences of this "prasent blessed St. John's Eve."

After the close of every festivity, it was

the custom of the Mayor of Wind-gap to patrol with his bailiff his circuit of authority; accordingly upon this night, when it was time for all to be a-bed and quiet, he renewed his customary precautions, and went to his own pillow assured that all his people were "safe and sound," and, against all chances, certain of continuing so till the morning. But, for once in his life, at least, the Mayor of Wind-gap was wrong.

CHAPTER V.

THERE may be some long-lived persons yet in existence, bred and born even out of the salubrious air of Wind-gap, who remember Roger Divey. He was best known in his day by the title of "yallow Roger,"—a surname derivable from the sooty-saffron hue of as much of his real surface as could be seen—namely, his large, lank, parchment-covered countenance, his hands and his legs. He was a tall, gaunt man; his trunk of

heavy bones, loosely strung together, supported by extremities, not much thicker, nor better shaped from the knees to the ancles, than the huge cudgel he always carried. At the time of our history, Roger was serjeant of the real Mayor of our town and its suburbs, including, of course, Wind-gap itself; and it was pretty well known that dame justice had no retainer in her service more mercenary than he.

If one might judge by his external aspect, he was a man of sedate gravity; apparently somewhat stupid; and honest, without the slightest shrewdness, or design.—Herein, however, lay Roger's talent; for, under the disguise of a sage and very uncomely owl, he hid the raven's cunning and rapacity. A lofty, pompous personage, withal, was Roger; slowly and solemnly he strode along the streets, his head erect, and his every action full of that "pride of place" which he felt marked him as the holder

of a station of much power and importance.

The morning after the bonfire on Windgap hill, Roger Divey was seen pacing through a certain street in the town, in which he officiated; and those in the habit of observing his outward expression, understood, by the settled dignity of his brow, and the severe and ominous protrusion of his nether lip, that he was proceeding on some errand of moment, connected with his calling. Opposite neighbours met half-way in the street, and put their heads together to express their conviction that he had weighty matters in hand; and passengers, as they encountered him, stopped short, and turned their eyes after the imposing official, each endeavouring to enlighten the other as to his probable destination.

Fully aware of the many enquiring looks directed towards his movements, Roger did not, however, vouchsafe to shew the slightest

consciousness of the important curiosity he excited. Filled with his own greatness, he strode onward; paused at the end of the street, and surveyed, with a deliberate traversing glance, a certain house; then nodded his head sedately to itself; moved three stately steps to the hall door; and calculatingly raised its knocker; and in his own good time, banged it down with such force that one might think the lion's head, moulded on it, had sent forth a roar.

After this tremendous challenge, Roger drew back some paces; hit the head of his gigantic shillelagh against the paving-stones; stretching forth his right arm at full length, rested the palm of his right hand upon it; fixed his left arm a-kimbo; boldly advanced his right leg before his person; threw back his head; and in this position awaited the result of his summons.

The door was opened by a frightened-looking serving wench, and the figure of

the landlady of the house appeared at some distance behind her.

"I say, you girl, you," demanded the man of authority, "would ye have one Masther George Blundell on the premishes, here?"

"E—ah!" was the only reply of the astonished and true Irish girl.

"Ye slut, ye!" continued Roger, "make thrue answer to sich custions as shall be demanded o' ye, at your peril, do ye see me?"

"What may be your business with my lodger, Mr. Blundell?" questioned the landlady, coming forward.

"That's his own consarn, Misthress of the house, d' ye see me? Make known to the young gintleman, i' ye plaze, that w'd discoorse with him; we don't have a call to people for no rason."

"Mr. Blundell isn't yet up, I b'lieve," said the landlady.

"That makes no maxim, Marram; up or down, its all the same to us. Jest give

him to undherstand that w'd hould some speech with him."

"You cannot see him now, you must call another time, my good fellow."

"Ha, hum, good fellow? who is it you affront by the name of good fellow? Marram, we must see him, and we shall see him, or we'll know for what."

Roger having spoken these words in a loud infallible voice which filled the whole street, cast his eye towards a window over head, and at it perceived the object of his enquiry looking down at him: he waved his arm magisterially, and continued — "Walk ye down here to us, young Master, walk down here to us, d'ye see me?" nor was this command given in a puny accent.

George Blundell was shortly on the threshold.

"What have you to say to me, Sirrah?"

"Ah, hum, Sirrah? we are no Sirrah,

my youth, we are no Sirrah ; isn't these purty doin's ? purty doin's isn't they ? by ye're lave, here, all o' ye, by your lave, d'ye see me ? " and Roger jostled through the group, which his bellowing and other noises had created, strode to the door - way, and, passing George Blundell, entered the hall of the house.

" What's to get ye clear out o' this prosecution, young master ? there isn't a bail bond to be taken, if we don't give in to take it for ye ? "

" Why are you disturbing the house, fellow ? let me know your errand at once, or I will thrust you into the street."

" Ha, hum, this kind o' talk won't sarve ye, while ye're afore his worship, and myself ; its a burglary matther, let me tell ye, many a stout fellow has died without being sick for a less charge, d'ye see me ? "

" Explain yourself, or begone "—

" Begone ! ha, hum ; would nothing do

your turn, my young masther, but to make a burglary on the dwellin' house, *why at arums*, and to brake dours, and to take, force, and carry away a man's daughter from him? and wid sticks, stones, and staves, to say nothing o'swoords and pistols, to make *salt and butthery* on a man? Let me tell ye, d'ye see me, that we know how to dale wid sich doin's; and barrin' there's one to make the case clear for ye, ye'll be hard run to keep away from the hill beyant the river, where some people dance upon nothing, to save their shoes."

"You are under some mistake, fellow; leave the house, and do not make a crowd round the door."

"Hem, lave the house! is that all I'm to get for my warning?"

"Leave it instantly!" and George looked dangerous.

"And who's to stand for ye, when ye're afore the Mayor and me, d'ye see me?"

George took the man by the collar, and, without much exertion, led him to the threshold, and pushed him over it. At that moment, his eyes rested upon a certain face and form in an opposite window, he bowed confusedly, retreated quickly, and shut the door on the outraged dignitary.

Roger had paid this early visit, in the way of pecuniary speculation. He calculated on being retained by George Blundell as an advocate, and had hoped to pocket by his services a good round sum. Now, it might have been supposed that in propor tion to his seeming failure, would be his wrath and disappointment. But, he not only felt no passion, but did not lose sight of his main object. He was not a hasty man, and he had his wits sufficiently about him to reckon that, with proper management, this assault on his sacred person, might eventually increase his profits. For Roger had never much objection to a slight

drubbing; on the contrary, he considered such little events as among his means of gaining an honest livelihood. We have seen him put forward his as yet unofficial charge, against George Blundell, in the highest tone of exaggeration. This was also his uniform practise; for the greater the terror he inspired in a guilty breast, the more heavy would be the retaining fee, for his pleading before the Mayor; or if he thundered forth his accusations and threats upon an innocent person, the more likely would be the accused to fly out into a passion and break Roger's pate, and in that case, although the original process fell to the ground, he would be sure to make money by the "salt and butthery business."

To the mansion of the Mayor, (by the way, we have lately sketched a Mayor of a town and his sergeant, but trusting to the total dissimilarity between them and our present subjects, we cannot resist the temp-

tation of presenting our readers with a companion-picture to the former one,) to the mansion of the Mayor, Roger wended his way. It was at that time the good old practise of the chief magistrates of the city to hold their court wherever they pleased, and their private dwellings were, during their term of office, often transformed, therefore, into halls of justice. Wind and weather permitting, our present Mayor decided all cases in the open air, at least, so far as regarded the positions of the plaintiffs and defendants before him. The house, occupied about fifty-five years ago by his worship, is now in existence, and whatever might then have been thought of it, appears to us a very mean edifice, only two stories high, and the whole of its first floor, as was also the case in Roger Divey's day, used as a shop; of which the little bow-window still holds, we are assured by very old people, the self-same (to all appearance at least,) red - herrings, tallow

candles, rows of tobacco, decanters of spirits, tea-cannisters, and so forth, and so forth, which it did in the eighteenth century.

One half of the Mayor's shop-door was raised up on hinges, and hooked against the ceiling; the top edge of the other half served as a resting-place for his round elbows, when in an attitude half-standing, half-bending, and mainly supported by those elbows, he discharged his judicial functions; the complaining and the answering parties being assembled meantime, as we before premised, in the street. By the charter of the city we treat of, it is decreed that "wise discreet citizens" shall be chosen to fill the several municipal offices; but unluckily, the instrument gives no datum by which one may ascertain what is to be considered wisdom and discretion in the said city; so that these qualities, legally specified as indispensible, have from time to time been

very differently exemplified, in very different individuals.

Roger Divey had been dubbed, "yallow Roger;" his worship the Mayor, who, on the arbitrary word of the interpreters of the charter, was a "wise and discreet citizen," had also received a surname, that of "alderman split-fig:" because, when weighing a penny-worth of figs in his shop, he would divide one of them into four parts, rather than give weight beyond the legal complement. He had contrived, however, to amass a considerable sum of money, (considerable, according to his time and position,) chiefly by these very saving talents; and we will at once admit that there can be no more valuable quality than the aptitude to get rich; and that it is our belief that, by the sense of all the world, as well as by that of his constituents, our present Mayor gave, in the length of his purse, proof positive of "wisdom and discretion."

When Roger Divey arrived at the Mayor's place of audience, a crowd of suitors had assembled in the street, around the half-door, or hatch-way. At the appearance of the influential officer, all instantly flocked to him, and all began, in the same breath, to relate their different grievances, or put forward their different defences. Roger authoritatively silenced this clamour; singled out the opposing parties, and led them, each in turn, into a lane that turned off at the corner of the Mayor's dwelling. There he listened to charge and reply; cried Ha! ha! hem! at proper intervals; occasionally nodded his sage head; most condescendingly glanced out of the corner of his eye, into the palm of his hand, to ascertain the relative amount of each fee; for Roger was always retained on both sides; and the cases in this initiatory court were adjourned in the first instance, to the greasy counter in the Mayor's shop, where, before real trial,

Roger further received from each disputant a little conciliation, in the shape of a glass of the peculiar kind of spirituous liquor which, by anxious calculation, could be concluded most acceptable to his palate; one giving him half a "noggin'" of gin and bitters, another a dram of brandy, another a modicum of purl and gill, and so on; and all this while Roger left his group of clients doubtful of the side he should ultimately take.

There was a second adjournment into the street; the half-door was again closed and bolted, and at length his Worship appeared to his crowded court, leaning over it. His wig not being ready dressed, a red woollen night-cap covered his bald head, and an ample outside coat, sufficiently ample even for his dimensions, hung cloakwise from his shoulders, its sleeves falling down his back; and we vault over his hatch-way, and land in his shop, to add that the knees

of his black plush breeches were, even at this hour of the morning, yet unbuttoned; that his broad red garters, which lapped over and over in many folds, to tighten his light blue stockings, were visible a little above the round of his leg; and that his feet were in comfortable listen slippers.

His worship was stricken in years; low, stout, and indeed undignified, in figure; the opposite, in fact, of his chief officer; and a pair of large grey protruding eyes, a broad flat nose; an under lip so conveniently pushing out, as to afford a comfortable resting place for its upper one, and altogether a round plump face, shewed little of a physiognomonical corroboration of the evidence supplied, on a certain point, by his long purse.

Giving his loose outside coat a twitch, in order to settle it round his shoulders, and then folding it comfortably under his arms, he leaned, as usual, both his elbows on the

edge of the half-door, and quietly turned his leaden eyes up and down the street.

"The top o'the mornin' to your Worship" — began Roger, snatching off his three-cocked hat, scraping his hob-nailed brogues along the pavement, and accompanying this movement by a corresponding bend in his lathy figure.

"A good morning to you, kindly, Roger," answered his worship, his gurgling voice making way with difficulty through his short round throat, "and what thrials comes' on to-day, Roger?"

In practical answer to this query, Roger at once proceeded in his accustomed capacity of counsel for and against. He brought forward plaintiffs and defendants in turn; he detailed, with great deliberation, and much ostentation of manner, various cases, with the replies to each; and now it was that the amount of a fee had due effect. If, during his recital, the party whose advocate

he had for the moment become, found himself misrepresented, and endeavoured in consequence to interrupt the statement, his Worship interposed, saying, with great quietude and complacency, "Asy now, asy! and let Roger tell it"—occasionally, however, the Mayor turned his eye heavily upon Roger's client, with an expression which indicated a sluggish wish to comprehend the orator's entanglement of a plain story, had heaven but blessed him with a due quantum of "wisdom and discretion." But if, in reply to such mute appeals, the plaintiff began to speak, the defendant was sure to start against him at the same moment, with the utmost power of his lungs and ingenuity; at which his Worship's perplexity becoming trebled, he was glad to fall back upon Roger's single puzzle; and his "Asy, asy now, good people, lave it to Roger"—would soon stop all clamour; for Roger scarce ever failed to impose silence under the good magistrate's authority.

"Well Roger, and what do *you* think about it?" his Worship would ask, when both stories were recapitulated over and over; and Roger, summing up evidence, in a masterly style, gave a decision, which the Mayor instantly adopted as his own. If any aggrieved person happened to expostulate—"Go your ways, go your ways, my good man"—was the signal for Roger to force off the grumbling suitor. Nor could the Mayor be in any instance accused of injustice; for, although his judgments were most frequently absurd, his intentions bore him harmless. It was not his fault that Roger's superior genius should keep his mind in leading-strings; and we must therefore in candor visit upon Roger exclusively the faulty administration of justice, in this rather slovenly court.

One man, amongst the complainants of the morning, seemed bursting with the magnitude of the case he had come to put for-

ward, and with the intensity of the feeling it excited in his breast. Frequently he advanced to begin his story; but Roger invariably thrust him back, to make way for others. In fact, whether from indigence, or because he regarded his grievance as sufficiently great to command immediate and full attention, this person had given Roger no retainer. But at length, every excuse for further delay was exhausted, and Roger could only look up and down the street in expectation of George Blundell's appearance; and, finally, as that young gentleman chose to absent himself altogether, very contrary to the hopes of the venal advocate, the Mayor's sergeant determined to plead forcibly against him, merely that his services might in future be more properly estimated.

"Plaze your worship," said Roger, "there is one Juff Carroll, d'ye see me; and he's from the Wind-gap abroad there, your

worship; and he lives in his little cabin there, indhusterin' for his bread, d'ye see me; and we can put in bail, your worship, that he's an honest hard-working crature of a man; and, by coorse, 'twas last night your worship"—

"Jest an hour afore the dawn of day," cried the applicant, "when my darlin' Peggy and myself came home from the bonfire on Wind-gap hill; and we sed our little prayers, and we went to our beds."

"Wisht, wisht, Juff Carroll," interrupted Roger.

"Asy, asy now, my honest man! and let Roger tell it to me," decided the Mayor: we would vary his phraseology, but that by so doing, we should not be true to our original; for he invariably made use of the same words, on similar occasions; as if life, time, breath, and above all things, intellect, were things too precious to be squandered on the vain attempt of trying

to express the same thought in two different ways.

"This poor honest Juff Carroll," resumed Roger, "who is here standing afore your worship, in the hoight of trouble, d'ye see me — he has a purty daughter, a purty honey, d'ye see me, your worship."

"Is she a purty honey, indeed, Roger?" his worship was always moved when Roger became oratorical.

"Oh! where's my Peggy now?" ejaculated the bereaved parent, "where have they dragged her, from the father that doated on her, in his heart within him!"

"And you were fond of her in your heart, my poor man;" demanded the mayor, surprising all who heard him with the abundance of his speech; but he had a daughter too.

"Why shouldn't I, your Worship? she was my only child! and the mother of her left her to me on the bed where she was

born! the light o' my eyes she was upon my flure, the comfort of my days!"

"Whist, whist now, Juff Carroll,"—interrupted the sergeant, getting jealous of Nature's spontaneous eloquence.

"Yes, asy my good man, asy now," added the mayor, brushing the tears from his eyes, "asy and let Roger tell it."

Accordingly Roger resumed, "T'was last night, d'ye see me, your worship, that the burglary and threspass was done on poor Juff Carroll; they broke open the dowr of his cabin, *why at arums*, d'ye see me, your worship, and the little daughter was taken, forced, and carried away from him."

"Dear me, dear me," sympathized the mayor, "and tell me, Roger, does this honest poor man know the people that done the burglary and the threspass on him? hey, Roger?"

"I do, I do know," answered the father, too rapidly for Roger's interference; "I'd

all as one swear my book oath that the man that sthruck me down was the sthrange man o' the Inch, and among the other men that were helpin' him, I'll swear there was one man, wearin' the same cloak and the same hat that young George Blundell had upon him, when I saw him in the sthrange man's company at the bon-fire; the time that the sthrange man frightened my poor Peggy, by his unmannerly behaver to her, and by his evil words in her ear."

"What does he mane by the sthrange man o' the Inch, Roger?" asked the mayor.

"Why, your worship, tisn't out of your knowledge that there is one dangerous tory of a man livin' at the wicked ould house at the Inch, abroad there; and he's an ould offender, d'ye see me—we had him up more than onst, afore your worship: and since then, he goes on with more wickeder plottin's and doin's than ever, out at the Inch, and"—

A smart tap from an open palm on Roger's shoulder interrupted his narrative. Offended and angry at the freedom, he turned quickly round; the strange man of the Inch was at his elbow. The father of Peggy Carroll, without power to utter a word, stared, gaped, pointed, and chattered his teeth at the dreaded visitor.—

The strange man was now dressed differently from his costume of the preceding night. A black silk handkerchief yet covered indeed, one eye and part of one cheek; over the other side of his face fell the peak of his laced cocked hat; and, to the fancy of some detesting observers, seemed to borrow a corresponding fierceness, and to become somehow frightfully indentified with the flaming ball which it shaded. His coat was of scarlet cloth embroidered with gold lace, his small clothes were black satin, his stockings black silk, and his well polished shoes were adorned with sparkling silver buckles.

There was a malicious, confident jocularity of manner about the strange man, as he moved into the lane, at the corner of the Mayor's house, beckoning Roger Divey to follow him. Roger, comprehending, at a glance, the meaning of his invitation, instantly accepted it. For a few moments he and his formidable confidante stood there within the recess of a gate-way. The strange man did not re-emerge into the main street, but Roger duly re-appeared before the Mayor. Peggy Carroll's father was disjointedly proceeding in his tale of grievance.

"Juff Carroll, hould your tongue," interrupted Roger, and the Mayor pronounced his usual command for silence. Roger gravely addressed the chief magistrate:

"Your Worship, poor Juff Carroll, that's here to the fore, and an honest crature of a man he is, d'ye see me, has a bad case to argufy afore your Worship — an' we'll all

do our endavors to rightify him, and to bring the offendhers undher the law, and why not, d'ye see me. More be token, since they made *salt and butthery* agin the person of Juff Carroll hisself—not to talk of the burglary and of the carrying away, by force and arums, o' the poor purty dhaughter of him,—'twas the greatest murdher, ever you seen, your worship, that he hadn't the light o' the day, or even a bit of a candle, or a rish-light itself, or a thing o' the kind, that 'ud help him to see and to 'dentify the housebreakers that sthruck him down on the flure of his own little cabin, into a swoon, like, in sich a way, (the villains!) that he couldn't see 'em if he had the full light o' the day itself, because people's eyes are shet, when there's a wakeness on them; an' 'twould be against the law to let wicked people be free that brake the pace a second time, for poor Juff Carroll, and dhragged his dhaughter, as aforesaid, over her father's threshold,

afther committing burglary upon the dour of the cabin; all the while that the poor sufferin' man couldn't tell from Adam who made him fall down into the swoon."

"He that forced off my Peggy," cried out Juff Carroll, "was here a moment agone —that was the robber of my child, and young Blundell was helpin' of him."

"Asy now, asy, poor man, God help ye; but you'll put Roger out: let Roger tell it to me; well, Roger?" interposed the Mayor.

"There's foolish people, plaze your Worship, that talks o' the jontleman livin' in the ould house at the Inch, abroad there; bud we'll put in good 'sponsible bail for him, afore your Worship, that he's nothin' but a quiet, dacent man, and that he'd no more commit a burglary on poor Juff Carroll's dour, *why at arums*, no more nor we'd do it ourselves, afther a manner, d'ye see me, your Worship. But if we can come, by

hook or crook across the bad boys that have done the harum to this crature o' a man, (poor Juff Carroll that's to the fore,) won't we lay the heavy hand on 'em, and for why not, d'ye see me, your Worship?"

There were violent efforts, on the part of the agonized father, to fix his charge on the person now praised in the speech of the mercenary officer; but peace and quiet were placidly recommended by the Mayor, and obstreperously insisted on by Roger.

"Ah, your worship, he's a very, very honest jontleman, livin' quiet and asy at the Inch; a nate paceable house, your worship, all alone by itself, out of harum's way; and, as for young Masther Blundell, if the cratur of a daughter belonging to this poor honest man was to stay in poor Juff's cabin till she ran to seed into an ould granny, he's never the boy that 'ud lay a finger on her; for he's the most modestest of all the boys, gentle or simple, that your wor-

ship and I has the throuble of lookin' afther. And so, your worship, d'ye see me, we'll do our endavours to saize the raal offendhers, or by this stick in my hand, Juff Carroll," he continued, turning to the now desponding parent—"we'll see the just thing done by you, in time and rason; for his worship, the Mayor, does right and thrue by every sowl that comes afore his face, d'ye see me."

The case was decided. In vain did Juff Carroll aver that he was "a'most proof positive," that the strange man of the Inch was the ruffian that plundered him of his child, and that George Blundell was one of his disguised accomplices. Roger still contended, and very plausibly too, according to the Mayor's opinion, that Juff could not at any period of the affray have distinguished the persons of his assaulters and destroyers, because, eventually, he had lain insensible under their hands: and poor

at last plodded his way homeward, to
d-gap, comforted solely by the slender
low of promise given by Roger Divey,
ee justice done to him. The last words
ch struck his ear, while turning his
k on the judgment seat, were those of
worship the Mayor:

'God help ye, poor man! go your ways
; 'tis a very sorrowful thing for ye; but
t ye hear what Roger says? go your
s, go your ways."

CHAPTER VI.

We are sorry that there hangs over George Blundell, according to his own account, at least, some of the old thread-bare mystery of parentage, and so forth, and wish that we could, as faithful historians, skip it altogether, or else give him at once in the eyes of the world, a respectable house-keeping father and mother. Against our will, however, we are bound to report of him the morsel of romance which he asserted about

votedness, return to his voluntary studies. And thus his boyish days promised a manhood of deep enthusiasm, no matter what might prove to be its momentary object, while his talents for attaining any thing, coupled with his fiery and overbearing spirit, swept all competition before him: and such a character bid fair for eminence, either in vice or in virtue, according as it might be directed. Now we turn to other matters.

Peggy Carroll, whom we have just seen carried off by, according to her father's account, the man of the Inch, was the foster-sister of Anny Kennedy; and in many points poor Peggy was as dear to Anny as if they had really been sisters. The news, therefore, of the girl's abduction greatly afflicted Anny Kennedy; and with her young attendant, a first cousin of Peggy, she shed many tears over the misfortune. But those tears flowed, perhaps, as readily on another

account. It was soon no secret, all over the town, that Juff Carroll had charged George Blundell as an accomplice in the outrage which deprived him of his child: Anny could not close her ears against the rumour; and although his worship, the mayor, had decided that it was only a misconception, yet, did fear and doubt and terror, possess the young girl's heart; the more particularly as she had been an eye-witness of Roger Divev's visit to the house of her lover, and of George's violent ejection of him into the street—a piece of bravadoism, by the way, which, in Anny's estimation, he need not have enacted, had he felt himself calmly innocent of the serious accusation laid at his door.

Jeffery Carroll lived down by the river-side, and his cabin was the very last within range of the jurisdiction of the Mayor of Wind-gap; and moreover, it stood not more than a quarter of a mile from the widely

celebrated house of the Inch. In Jeffery's humble abode, Anny and her maid Grace had spent many happy days of their infancy; thither, about the noon of the morning of the investigation before the Mayor, they bent their steps; and there, from poor Jeffery's own tongue they received a confirmation of all they had previously heard. Nay, the afflicted and loquacious man, talking himself, hour after hour, into certainty upon points which he had before but strongly believed, at present averred that, beyond all doubt, George Blundell was one of the ravishers of his daughter. And now Anny's grief and despair at least equalled his. After some time spent in vain endeavours to console Juff Carroll, the two young women began to retrace their way homeward. They were close to a lane which, shaded by bushes on either hand, led directly to the water's edge, and were about to enter it, when Anny Kennedy drew back

in terror, for within it she heard the accents of George Blundell, although she could not see his person, and he was engaged in conversation with another man, whose harsh, abrupt tones conveyed a frightful anticipation to Anny's heart.

"One word more, one sound more, from your lips, Sir, and you shall repent it," said the strange bad voice, in a most dictatorial tone—"from that instant I throw you upon your own flourishing resources; you must wait my time, Sir, and nothing else will I hear on the subject."

"And while I wait your time, she may be lost to me for ever," replied George Blundell.

"That is nothing to the purpose, Sir;—but tell me, Sir, what like girl is this, who has so caught your foolish fancy? this Anny Kennedy?"

"She is such, even in person, that words of mine would fail to describe her."

Notwithstanding her terror, and all her agonizing misgivings, the true woman fluttered for an instant at these words in Anny's heart, and she felt rather obliged to George Blundell.

"Snap her up, Sir—snap her up; it can only be herself you want, and herself is easily had for a little courage; let me tell you, boy, that a woman is like a gallant vessel on the sea, though still weaker than the ship that encounters her, and the sooner you come to close action, the sooner she strikes her colours; and for this you may take the word of one who knows both the ship at sea, and woman in every clime."

"I fear," resumed George, "that the accusation in which I am involved may have reached her ears—If I might only explain to her, or try, ever so confidentially, to—

"Tut, tut, Sir! not a syllable,—Never shall she be yours, that is, with my assist-

ance, if you open your lips to her on the matter."

Anny stood pale and breathless at these words—It suddenly occurred to her, to avoid the observation of George Blundell and of this unknown arbiter of his destinies, and the wish was fearfully increased, when she heard their footsteps approaching. Her only mode of retreat, however, was along the field-path by which she had approached the lane; and this was unprotected by any covering or screen; so that she could hope to remain out of their view only for a few moments. While hesitating and trembling, George Blundell and his companion, suddenly issuing from the lane, were close to her. At sight of Anny, the former seemed overwhelmed with amazement and confusion; the latter started into an attitude of bold and intrusive interest, and fixed a daring look upon her face.

"The sthrange man!—the sthrange man

o' the Inch!" whispered Anny's attendant, grasping her mistress by the arm; and, agitated as Anny herself was, she felt that poor Grace Carroll shook in a very palsy of fear.

But Anny took her resolution and her course at once: onward she hurried, in as quick a pace as she could command, Grace Carroll still holding her arm, and trotting at her side. George Blundell addressed her, but she had passed him before the words reached her ear; she heeded him not, but hastened onward—He called her by name; she did not notice him. She heard his foot behind her; Anny, identified as he now clearly stood with the evil person in whose company she had found him, felt an impulse to run with all her might from her lover; but she checked the nervousness, by a recollection that such an act would be beneath her.

"Dearest Anny, why do you shun me

thus?" asked George Blundell, when he had come up with her—she again tried to quicken her pace, but did not answer him. He kept close at her side, and besought her to speak. She glanced hastily behind her; the strange man was not in view—a turn in the lane had hidden him from her. She felt somewhat relieved, yet could not, without an effort, command her breath to say—

"Mr. Blundell, I had rather walk alone."

"Anny, adored Anny, what can be the meaning of this? Why do you shun to-day the man you did not shun yester evening?"

Anny was again silent, and still walked briskly on—her movements a little retarded by the way, in consequence of the heavy weight, in the shape of Grace Carroll, which dragged down her arm.

"Anny, is it possible, Anny, you can give credit to those absurd rumours raised against me? and do you really think me guilty, Anny, of all they lay to my charge?"

She stopped suddenly, and looking down for an instant, answered him, for a girl, sternly—

"Mr. Blundell, I will not pronounce an opinion on your guilt, or your innocence; but, as calmly and as firmly as my foolish fright, and my true indignation, permit, I tell you that, even with the bare imputation on your character of the crimes to which you allude, it is more than presumptuous in you to address me at present, as you do."

"Presumptuous, my own darling Anny? presumptuous, did you say?" whined forth the unintelligible George Blundell.

"Yes, Sir, presumptuous; for do you suppose that I can ever again speak with a man, even in the coldest intercourse of society, who has violated the sanctity of a virtuous roof, and dragged a daughter from a father's arms? Or, Sir, do you suppose, have you dared to suppose, that I ever could have interchanged even the slighest

intimacy with him, had I imagined he was capable of such an act?"

"My adored Anny, I swear to you by the—"

"Fie, Sir, fie—your coming oath is a new affront—I am a woman and a lady, and not yet at your mercy, to listen to it."

"Oh Anny—most beloved Anny—I know not what to say—"

"Neither do I know, Sir, what you may say; but I know perfectly well what you ought to do. Listen to me, Mr. Blundell—I loved, and I love my foster-sister, Peggy Carroll; although a humble girl, she was a very good-hearted one—to say nothing of her being very lovely; she was a sensible and discreet girl too, and used to act as a kind of elder sister towards me:—Go, Sir, to your bad companion—the disreputable man you have just parted from—go to him, Sir, and persuade him to restore my poor Peggy to her agonized father; let her be re-

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at last?" Her beautiful little lips were now pale, and convulsed with an effort to cease from her weeping.

"Anny," he answered, "you are right; I do not blame you; I blame, no matter whom — or what—and — but that you are present, I could curse my fate, and the day of my birth. And it is true, very true, that you should not hold the most ordinary intercourse with a person accused as I am; I will not, therefore, intrude upon you; but, at a future time, perhaps, when I may possibly be able to cast the imputation from me, your first scorn may abate, and—"

"*Will* you restore Peggy Carroll to her father?" interrupted Anny.

"At present," answered George Blundell, "I make but this simple declaration—I am guiltless of the young woman's abduction. Professions of principle are nothing. It will, and, under my circumstances, it ought to avail me little to say, that I contemn

passion outweighed her sense of injury, and that fresh tears — but now not for Peggy Carroll—glistened in her eyes.

"Oh, Miss Anny!" said Grace Carroll, as they proceeded along, "did you ever know such loock as we had this day, to get clear of them so well?"

"Very true, Grace, very true," the young lady answered, scarcely knowing the nature of the question she replied to.—On she walked, her eyes cast down, and her thoughts absorbingly occupied. Her companion continued —

"Did a livin' look ever rest on so terrible a man, as that sthrange man o' the Inch, Miss Anny? Och! its a mercy there's but one eye in his head, or nobody at all would stand before him, they say; there's not a young crature he stares at that doesn't come to sorrow by him—Poor cousin Peggy, poor cousin Peggy, what a lot is yours!—But—the Lord above be our guard and protection,"

glance of such beauty as your's only arouses the wish for a second."

"Allow us to pass on, Sir," said Anny.

"I perceive, fair lady, that fools have been filling your head with silly stories about me; in fact, the good folks of these parts want to make a kind of buggaboo of me, to frighthen their children, and grown-up young people with; but I should expect more sense, as well as more charity, from such a countenance as yours, Miss Kennedy; doubtless you can laugh, as I assure you I do, to my great amusement, at those absurd stories; for," advancing on her, "I swear by this fair hand"—

"Back, Sir!" interrupted Anny, herself recoiling—"Dare you insult *me?*"

"Insult you! By the fire under ground, beautiful Anny, I would not stand by and see the shadow of an offence offered to you; but, being beautiful, how can you avoid paying its penalty of a little sincere admiration?"

knees; hid her face in her hands, worked the points of her brogues into the dust of the path, and cried out—"Och! Sir—no—not me—not me—and the Lord be good to ye."

"Get up, you foolish wench, and run home as fast as you can," resumed the strange man, whose interest seemed not very much created by the plain, though good-natured, features of poor Grace.

"Ah then, won't I Sir, and thank ye!" shouted the consternated girl, feeling the touch of his hand upon her shoulder; and, every thing forgotten, even the safety of her idolized mistress, up to her feet sprang Grace, and onward she went, loudly yelling and clapping her hands.

"This is too insolent," said Anny—trying to pass her tormentor, by almost imitating Grace's example, and running—

"Your hand, then, at least, to say Good-bye," continued the strange man,

continued appealing very innocently to the strange man.

"Faiks, and surely I ought to cock my head higher than ever I did. But, Miss Anny, I'll tell you how 'tis to be, this prasent time—the road is too narrow for three of us, and so we must take our way down the hill, over the river—" and, almost while he spoke, the Mayor of Wind-gap suddenly assisted Anny from where they stood, and half ran with her down the hill of which he had spoken.

Strange to say, the strange man, strange as he was, did not attempt to follow them; only gaining a point from which he could note the progress of the old beau, and his charge; and, during his retreat, Maurteen would occasionally look up, and address a word to his strange-ship, while under his breath he encouraged his companion, telling her to fear nothing.

At about the midst of the descent of the

her knees, and clasped and kissed her mistress's hand.

Maurteen, doubly charged, a girl hanging upon each arm, continued his way towards and by the river side. He thought he might now have escaped the observation of an eye which he did not always wish to follow his notions, but seeing the strange man still within view, though at a distance, he resumed with a very primitive laugh, "Now ar'nt they merry souls, Sir? see here, Sir; see how they're makin' their own sport of the ould man. *Bonnacth lath*, * Sir. God be wid ye, Sir."

"And now, Miss Anny," continued the Mayor of Wind-gap, when they had really lost sight of their bugbear, "hould yourself up, and never be daunted. I thought it the best way to come off quiet and aisy; 'tis ever the wisest plan; he saw well enough

* Good bye.

the Inch, after all, I thought I could forestal him; and so, Miss Anny, at the time I came up wid ye, there were five or six sthrong young men from Wind-gap, lying in the ditch, that's now over your head. For although I always had a mind to thry aisy manes, I thought, at that present time, that if the sthrange man shewed any fight against me, in your regard, one whistle on my finger would make him be tumbled head over heels into the river. But we were not called on to attempt that; and we have our own way, any how, widout it; and that's the aisiest way; and the best way, too; for as I often said afore, the aisy way is the best way."

"Good old man," cried Anny, "I could almost kneel to you, to thank you."

"And very sorry I'd be," said Maurteen Maher, "to see you spiling your nice white gownd, goin' on your knees wid it, on the grass, for a sarvice not worth a *thraw-*

hands over all Wind-gap, far and near, if I was fool enough to shew my face among the people with Miss Anny Kennedy houlding one of my limbs, and Grace Carroll amost pulling the other out o' my body; let me see if ye can stand alone."

"Oh! do not leave us, my good friend!" besought Anny.

"I'll hould my hould;" said her companion.

"By the thruth o' a man," smiled Maurteen, "I wish in my heart I was young an' well lookin', for your sake, Grace Carroll; and I wish I was the same, over again, and dhrivin' a gilt coach and six, for your sake, Miss Anny. I have no notion at all to go from ye, my darlins; but, let me tell ye, I must mind myself well, because people look up to me; and I never could hould rule in Wind-gap, if the neighbors were to see me, walkin' in among 'em, gall-vantin' the both of ye, in this manner. I'll stay wid

"Now, Gregory, go into your work—I want to have some discoorse, here, with Miss Anny; and when I cough, come out again, and shew us your manners, if nothing else, as well as you know how."

"Mayor of Wind-gap, I'll be led and said by you, and for why not? Young lady, I wish health an' happiness to you; Jeffery Carroll's niece, God be wid ye;" and the mannerly Gregory bowed himself away.

"An' now, Miss Anny," continued Maurteen Maher, "I brought ye here for two reasons; first, that ye might rest yourself; rest will be good for you, before you go through the town; for I saw you were sorely frightened a little while agone—"

"Oh indeed, indeed I was," assented Anny.

"And I don't wonder; and it isn't to frighten ye more, that I am goin' to spake further to ye; but I want to put you on your guard, Miss Anny—You'd do a right thing

The two girls started, and put many questions to Maurteen.

"She is safe, and sound, and well,"—answered the Mayor, smiling; without hurt or sorrow, beyond the fright she got; only *that's* enough to make her remember the Man of the Inch, to her dyin' day; and it will give you faith in me, on your own account, Miss Anny, and 'twill make ye b'lieve I can do things other people cannot do, when I tell ye the Mayor of Wind-gap saved Peg Carroll from that very man."

Grace Carroll asked no questions, uttered no words, but ran to the Mayor, threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him until he was tired of the pastime.

"Come, come, Grace," he said, "we must behave ourselves dacent—you'll get a disrespectful name among the neighbors; there, ma-colleen, sit down, and listen to all about it."

And poor Grace resumed her seat, wiping

the tears from her eyes with her apron, and giggling, blushing, and ashamed of her ecstacies.

In great astonishment, Anny Kennedy enquired how he had been able to accomplish his good work?

"I have a notion," answered Maurteen, "that Peggy Carroll will tell her own story in the best fashion, and more to your likin' than I could."

"She is here! she is in this house!" cried Anny, springing from her seat, while Grace pranced wildly round and round her mistress, laughing loudly, and of course clapping her hands.

"She is undher this roof, of a sartainty," answered the Mayor; "before it came to my knowledge that you and Grace there—(Grace, you big omadhoun, behave yourself quiet, I bid ye)—were goin' to Juff Carroll's cabin, it was my mind to be wid him afore ye, and let him into the sacret; but ye put the thought out o' my head, for that

present time, and though Peggy slept here the best part o' last night, I wouldn't undecaive Juff airly in the morning, because he would then go wid his complaint to that ould *gommulagh* the Mayor o' the town, and so the Man o' the Inch would guess Juff knew where she had been taken to, and that wouldn't be the safest way—howsomever, poor Juff will soon larn all about it, and his ould heart set at ease—and it would never do to take Peggy to her father, for there might be a watch set for her, thereabouts, and she can keep close here for a while, and no one the wiser."

The sage Mayor coughed twice, very audibly, as he finished this explanation; and the mannerly Gregory Roche accordingly re-appeared, ushering in the emancipated damsel, who was instantly in the arms of her foster-sister, and nearly as instantly in those of her real blood relation, Grace.

"There's a kind of a bird," the Mayor

little thought in it, is more to my notion. And so, now, Peggy, *malurna*, tell all about your misfortunes and your scrapes."

A few words are enough to condense Peggy's recital of her adventure. She went homeward from the excelling bonfire at Wind-gap, still agitated even to fear, by the actions, and more particularly by the words, of the strange Man of the Inch. At the moment of offence, she did not recognize the person of her tormentor, as a universally dreaded individual; but the strange man, upon occasions when he had encountered her near her father's house, at the river side, had previously expressed himself in a similar way; and Peggy, therefore, concluded that the individual who broke up the enjoyment of her dance on St. John's Eve, could be no other than the way-layer of her private walks; for, to aid her opinion, although his face and person were well disguised, some tones of the voice carried

into it. A door, in one of the enclosing walls of its premises, opened for her; she entered a garden, and was locked into a turret, or summer-house, as it was called, immediately over the river. In this position, Peggy abandoned herself to despair; when she heard a key turn in the lock of a door opposite to that through which she had been pushed into her unwilling retreat. The well-known voice of the Mayor of Wind-gap called upon her; she committed herself to his care; he locked his own door, as he called it, after him; descended three or four steps to the water; placed Peggy in a very small boat—indeed, a kind of Indian canoe; paddled silently and swiftly across the stream, to the opposite bank; hurried her through a long public promenade, at this time of night quite deserted; walked her through the whole of the town again, one side of the river to the other, and at last deposited her in the safe and respect-

able place of refuge in which our
friends have found her.

And, indeed, the Mayor of Win
seemed not a little vain of the admi
of his tact, and ingenuity, and pro
which this history impressed upon the
of his hearers. Like most ambitious
he wished to creep on, step by step, th
society; and in the same way that h
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can it be said that he was unsuccessfu
Anny had received as much proof of
teen's power to counter act, on the occa
Peggy Carroll's abduction, the wile
villainies of the strange Man of the
as she could hope to have of his capa
according to his promise, of assistin
self in any case of emergency.

"And, oh! Mayor of Wind-gap

Grace, "whenever we get up in the mornin' from our beds, and whenever we lie down at night, it is we that will always be returnin' our thanks to you, and our prayers too, above, for your good health, and your long reign over Wind-gap!—and if there's ever a thing to do us hurt or harm in the town below, it's to you we'll come, and not to the foolish ould Mayor, that has only the name of a Mayor in that place."

same authority, he had never been married to her unknown mother.

It will be recollected that the old story-tellers at the bonfire, at Wind-gap, spoke of one, who, having been rescued from penury by young Harry Stokesbury, had contrived to inherit the young man's paternal property, and also to espouse for himself the young lady intended as Harry's bride. The tragedy attending this double deception has also been talked over by the old people; and the needy cousin, reported to have acted so treacherously to his violent-tempered patron, was no other than Anny's guardian, or, as the case might really be, Anny's parent. Connor Kennedy recovered very slowly from the wounds inflicted on him by the outrageous Harry Stokesbury; but the shock sustained by his nerves, never of a strong texture, he was not able to throw off. Ever since, however, he had enjoyed the undisturbed possession of the wealth

so unfairly come by; to all of which, it was said, Anny was heiress apparent.

Notwithstanding his dreadful retaliation for the wrongs he had suffered, young Stokesbury's banishment from his home, and his subsequent trials, and miserable death, created considerable sympathy in his favour. Many indeed thought that the treachery to which he had been a victim gave ample warrant for any species of revenge on the person of its author; so that Connor Kennedy was scarce regarded, by the generality of his neighbours, in any other light than that of a wily, ungrateful, and perhaps only sufficiently punished, man.

It was now twenty years since Stokesbury's last fearful visit to his cousin; and, during the whole of this long period of time, Connor Kennedy had lived on, under the odium attached to his name, without any effort to win the world's better opinion. He had no friends, he had not even acquaintances, [illegible] no invitations, and he g[illegible]t none; he r

dom stepped over the threshold of his door, even for the purposes of exercise; his domestic habits, so far as they could be known, were gloomy, ascetic, and very frugal: and from this last circumstance—his expenditure being so far within his income, it was conjectured that, apart from the proceeds of his rent roll, he had been annually acquiring personal property to a great amount.

Upon the evening of the day during which the occurrences last related had taken place, George Blundell sought admission at Connor Kennedy's door. His features, generally pale, were now pallid; much suffering was marked upon them, and his movements displayed that languor which proceeds from the mind, and which not the most painful bodily fatigue can occasion. He enquired if he could see Miss Kennedy, and, without receiving a direct reply, was shewn into an empty parlour. Here he continued for some time alone, now pacing

about the apartment, now abruptly flinging himself into a chair, and now standing up, again, to repeat his impatient tour round a table, which stood in the middle of the floor. The door at length opened —George Blundell started, in great agitation: a blush of eagerness overspread his face, but soon subsided, and his brow darkened with displeasure, as Connor Kennedy half crept in, peering around him, in his usual nervous and suspicious manner.

Connor Kennedy was tall and thin; pale and sharp featured; stooped in the shoulders; and characterised by a weak half-shut, unsteady eye, and by an almost cringing of step and action, which, to many, indicated the mean stealthiness of his nature, and illustrated his capacity for committing the crimes laid to his charge. But, notwithstanding his present appearance, Connor Kennedy was known to have been very handsome in his youth.

George Blundell was not ignorant of the character attributed to the man now before him; and, in reference to the subject which engrossed the lover's mind, had been prepared, from the moment he entered the parlour, to regard him with doubt and suspicion. Yet he bowed low to Mr. Kennedy; and Mr. Kennedy, with a drooping of the eye, seemingly most melancholy, and with his habitual, though tepid smile, which had neither mirth nor happiness in its meaning, bowed even more profoundly, and even humbly, to his visitor.

"I wish you a very good evening, Mr. Blundell," he said, in a voice so low, though it was his common one, that it scarce rose above a whisper, "will you take a chair, and be seated."

George Blundell silently obeyed. Connor Kennedy took another chair some distance from him, placed the palms of his hands on his knees, to support his droop-

ing person, and fixed his eyes on the carpet.

There was an embarrassed pause, as if both felt unwilling to commence a disagreeable discussion: at length Mr. Kennedy spoke, but without glancing at the person he addressed.

"I believe, Mr. Blundell, your visit was not particularly meant for me—" yet still he smiled, in his habitually timid way.

"In entering your house, sir," answered George Blundell—"I always feel of course the greatest pleasure when we meet; yet, on this particular occasion, I will not deny that my first object was to have the honour of speaking a few words with Miss Kennedy."

"Yes—ay—so I have learned; that is—the servant—that is—I mean—Miss Kennedy — that is—Mr. Blundell—I am sure you will agree with me—one is sometimes obliged to discharge rather unpleasant duties

—and in fact, Mr. Blundell—you are yourself aware—that—"

Mr. Kennedy stopped speaking altogether —George Blundell, in expectation of some distant remark or proposition, remained as silent as he. There was another long and disagreeable pause; Mr. Kennedy chose to resume.

"But, Mr. Blundell, although duties are unpleasant—they must be fulfilled, Mr. Blundell; — and it gives me the greatest pain—indeed, Mr. Blundell, it does pain me exceedingly — to be obliged to say—that—"

He stopped a second time, as if at a loss for words, or as if too physically nervous to summon them up at his will, and for his purpose.

"What *do* you mean, Mr. Kennedy?" at length demanded George Blundell, in a sonorous voice, tired as well as agitated with his host's hesitation. "Do you wish

to tell me that Miss Kennedy will not see me? is that, sir, the intelligence you want to communicate?"

"Exactly so, Mr. Blundell — exactly so—"

"And I thought as much, Mr. Kennedy, when you first came into the room"—

"I am sorry, very sorry indeed, Mr. Blundell; as by the tone of your voice, I judge that her wish may prove disagreeable to you—but, Mr. Blundell —"

"Well, sir, well?"—demanded George, getting very impatient.

"That is—Mr. Blundell — I hope and trust that you will see yourself—that Miss Anne—should—ought to come to this decision."

"What decision, Mr. Kennedy? tell me really what you mean?"

"Why—Mr. Blundell—you see—by my appearing here for her — that Miss Anne does not wish to see you herself."

"And why, Mr. Kennedy? why?" and George's voice began to rise, and his eyes to open more and more.

"I declare," said Mr. Kennedy, very mildly, "I have nothing very particular to say upon that point, that is—I suppose—Miss Anne would have come to you, if that is—if she really wanted to come—that is, Mr. Blundell, I mean to say—but—in the meantime, I beg leave to observe that—I have really nothing to say upon my own account, on the occasion."

"Pooh, sir, you know you represent Miss Kennedy here this evening."

"No, now, indeed, Mr. Blundell—I cannot in this instance, call myself—Miss Kennedy's representative;—and I beg you will understand that, very distinctly—if—Miss Kennedy acts at all expressively, in not seeing you, during this present visit of yours, it must be, I assure you, according to her own free choice; for I am but—a

—a weakly man, unfit for contests of any kind."

"Then, sir, in what light am I to consider you, appearing as you do for Miss Kennedy, if you do not appear as her representative?"

"Mr. Blundell—in that case you will please to consider me as something in the light of the young lady's confidante."

"Sir—I can see only a difference of terms;—Well, sir—apart from the business of this evening, I need not remind you that, as Miss Kennedy's *confidante*, you have always been quite aware of the understanding upon which you allowed my visits to your house?"

"Of course, Mr. Blundell—of course."

"Then, sir, upon what grounds do I so suddenly find my visits unwelcome?"

"I declare, Mr. Blundell, upon no grounds, that—to my own knowledge—I

can sufficiently explain but you may be aware that—"

"Mr. Kennedy"—interrupted George, "There is but one word can get us out of our present dilemma; she or you, or both together, have heard something to my disadvantage—have you, or have you not?"

"Why, Mr. Blundell, I declare to you"-

"Have you, or have you not, sir?" repeated George, warmly.

"Oh, now, Mr. Blundell, pray do not agitate yourself; but—perhaps I may as well own to you that something of the kind, though I do not know exactly what, has been spoken of through the house."

"And what is it?" demanded George.

"Oh—Mr. Blundell—you know I before told you that I did not quite understand its nature."

"Very well, sir—but are you then astonished that I should want to come to the

question with Miss Kennedy, if you chose to evade it? Mr. Kennedy," he continued, almost with an air of distraction, you know, or you ought to know, that my preservation, or destruction, depends upon you."

"Oh, now, young gentleman, do not be so impetuous, I pray you; impetuosity often leads to very dreadful consequences."

"I do not intend, Mr. Kennedy, to be impetuous—I should not wish to be so, for your sake—but I plainly see that some slander has done me wrong in this house; and here you come as the only person to meet me beneath its roof; and, now, I only implore you, most anxiously and humbly, to gain me one moment's interview with Miss Kennedy—Listen to me, sir, a little farther, before you answer;—age must ice my manner, and manacles must confine my limbs, before I could quietly rest one instant under Miss Kennedy's unfavourable opinion."

"I am a man of a weakly constitution, Mr. Blundell; violence always makes me nervous; be patient, my good young gentleman, be patient."

"Mr. Kennedy—I have spent many hours, trying to temper down the very violence of which you speak, and I am sure, I am at last patient, and not violent; but if I am now denied the opportunity of vindicating myself, in Miss Kennedy's opinion, against an unknown—that is against an unadmitted charge, should you wonder, sir, if my naturally hot temper, as you all call it, should cease to be patient?"

"Truly, truly, Mr. Blundell—I do not know how to act."

"Act then, sir, as any man ought, who feels for the real unhappiness of another.—Mr. Kennedy," he continued, becoming, perhaps, absurdly energetic, as he knelt on one knee—"I humble myself to you, as I thought I never could to mortal man, and

I implore you, sir, not to permit me to leave this house without the explanation I ask you for!"

Mr. Kennedy glanced upward one instant from the carpet, "Rise, Mr. Blundell, rise, I beseech you, sir———" he touched George's hands, and feeling their resistance to his appeal, again looked into the young man's face; and now so intently, that George, from all his previous appreciation of the recluse's character, was struck with the expression of his glance.

"If your heart has not been hardened from your birth, sir, you will pity me," resumed George.

"Oh God forbid, that such a heart, or such a nature, were ever mine! ejaculated Mr. Kennedy. "But go to your chair, Mr. Blundell, or we can never continue our conversation." — George re-seated himself. "Mr. Blundell, I do not bring any charges against you—understand me in that, I beg

of you; but candidly do you think—and answer me candidly, I know you will,—that under present circumstances, Miss Kennedy ought to meet you?

"Ought to meet me, sir? ought to meet me?—but all these words are idle. You of all men, Mr. Kennedy, should not—but no I will not retort. I am hot-headed, sir, if you wish; forgive me. I will be quite candid with you.—I do suspect, notwithstanding all you say, that your opinion has influence over Miss Kennedy—and that you have advised her to deny herself to me this evening; your very manner tells me so; and I can only again beg of you as the most humble beggar could for a half-penny, to gain me ten minutes' conversation with her."

Mr. Kennedy rose from his chair, much agitated;—he perceived that it was by a great effort that the young man curbed his impassioned feelings.

"Well then, I will go to Anny, Mr. Blundell, and"

"You will use your influence in my favour? say you will!" cried George once more impetuously.

"Now, Mr. Blundell, you alarm me; I cannot tell why; but I am not a strong man, and you alarm me!"

"It is not my intention to do so, sir; I would rather again supplicate your compassion in the most humiliating way—but tell me, sir, am I to see Anny? for"—George muttered, or rather growled, "I do not know how I may abide a refusal"

"Well, Mr. Blundell,—if my interference can avail, Anny will come to you; and so, a good evening—a very good even ing to you, Mr. Blundell."

"You promise me, sir, do you not?"

"Why yes, if she come at my bidding I do promise you—" and Mr. Kenned timidly bowed himself out of the room. This was palpably a constrained c inst his conviction

what was right, or from some other cause, we do not say. After his agitated and almost trembling exit, George Blundell fixed his eye upon the door, which he had cautiously closed after him, and strained his ears, listening to every step and noise through the house. A full quarter of an hour elapsed, and still he was alone. At length the door briskly opened; an elderly woman who, as George was aware, filled a confidential situation in the Kennedys' establishment, came courtesying towards him, evidently under the influence of terror. George Blundell frowned again, confronted her, and looked his enquiry.

"My young mistress bid me say to you, sir," hastily began the messenger of bad tidings,——and she, like her master, hesitated and stopped.

"Say what to me? that she will not come to see me? is that your message?"

"Mr. Connor Kennedy—"

"Go on, woman,—what of him?"

"Why, sir, if Miss Anny came at all, sir, it wouldn't be to her own liking that she'd come."

"But she would come, only for Mr. Kennedy?"

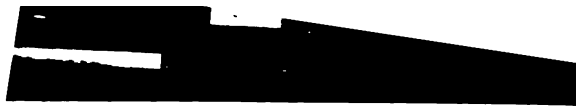
"It isn't all on't, that, sir; but——"

"No matter," interrupted George Blundell, "I see there is equivocation on all hands: tell Mr. Kennedy, and tell Miss Kennedy—but, no; say nothing to them—they shall hear of it in another way." And he hurried out of the house.

CHAPTER VIII

The morning after this occurrence, Anny Kennedy was formally summoned to a conference with the Mayor of Wind-gap, upon very important business, as the messenger informed her. Immediately descending, she found his Worship in the same parlour whence George Blundell had so hastily made his departure the evening before.

"A bright good morning to your hand some face, Miss Anny," he began, smiling very cordially.



"Good morning to you, my honest friend," answered Anny.

"Och! there's a cloud darkening your young brow," continued Maurteen; "and there's a blight stealing on your young heart, and more's the pity; but never give grief the mastery over ye, my purty young crature: it would be a sore thing to see the may-bush withered in its blossoming."

Anny sighed dolefully, but made no other answer.

"If it could be helped, Miss Anny, I'd go a good long way, afore I'd add any thing to your throuble."

"Is it of that evil man at the Inch that you have come to speak to me, good father? I understood from you that we were soon to have more explanation about him?"

"In thruth, then, it is to spake consarning him that I am here to the fore this morning, Miss Anny."

"Go on, then, at once, I beseech you," cried Anny, eagerly.

"Don't give up to greater fear than there is a need for, my purty young lady; the biggest reason why I did not like to open all my mind to you yestherday, was, because something I had to say was for your own self alone."

"Oh! I have not slept last night, thinking and dreaming of him! every time I closed my eyes his disagreeable image was before me."

"People is fools enough to say, Miss Anny,—though I don't think, in my own mind, there's much sense in the saying, that the young girl his look fixes on ought to be on her guard."

"What can you mean?" demanded Anny slowly; "do you suppose he would dare to——"

"In thruth I don't, *Ma lanna*," resumed Maurteen, as she paused, answering her un-

expressed meaning;—"but, Miss Anny, 'tis an ould maxim with me, this many a year, to make provision against the worst that can come round; and when I go according to the maxim, my mind and myself, of course, along with the mind, then jogs on asy and quiet, ever and always. But it's my hope and belief that nothing like the worst, or half of the worst can come next, or nigh, you; for, as I tould you, undher the roof of my counsel's house, on Wind-gap hill, I have the power to make that man, wicked as he is, and much as he frightens other people, give you up into my hands, even though you might be in his"

"Yes, I remember you said so."

"Well, my purty Miss Anny, I could say no more till we were together, and nobody by. Now I'll say that more—d'ye see this paper, Miss Anny?" he continued, holding before her eyes something like a seale letter.

"I certainly do see it," assented Anny.

"The writing that is inside of this I penned down with my own hands; and there's no one in the world wide knows what the writing manes, but myself only; and the writing is for you, Miss Anny."

"But what *are* the contents of the paper?" she asked.

"That you are not to know, my purty lady: but I'll tell you what use you're to make of it; only, afore I do that, you must give me a vow; aye, as binding a vow as if you swore upon the blessed book!"

"This is very strange! what is the nature of the vow?"

"You must vow to me before the good heaven that loves you, and takes care of you, my purty child,—that no eye but your own shall ever see this paper, even the outside of it, barring the time comes to put it to a right use; you must vow to me that you will never open it yourself, nor give it

any other to be opened, barring you give it to the only one I penned it down for; and you must vow to me, too, that if a time never comes to hand it over to that one, you will return it to me, safe and sound, as I will give it to you."

"And who is it for, and to whom am I to deliver it? and when am I to deliver it?"

"It is for the sthrange Man o' the Inch, my purty lady, and no other eye but his is to see it, outside or inside; and no hand but his is to touch it, except your own: and you are never to deliver it to him until you're alone with him, much against your will, and in some fear and trembling of him; and when it's come to the last moment with you, and when no door is left open for you; and it's then you are to deliver it to him, with mannerly compliments from Maurteen Maher, the Mayor of Wind-gap."

"My good man, how you confound an

terrify me! is it indeed possible that you can calculate such a situation for me?"

"The Lord above keep you far from it!" answered Maurteen; "and in thruth, no, Miss Anny, I don't talk of it at all as a thing that's sartain sure to happen; and you'd obleege me by not given' yourself distress by taking me up in a mistake;—but I tould you my maxim,—'fore-warned, fore-armed.' Be ready for an evil day, and an evil day will most likely keep from you. So, take the paper,—it won't hurt or harm you; it won't bite, or bruise, or burn you. And there's another maxim I go by,— that as long as there's a purse in the chest, the owner of it need'nt go without his dinner barrin' he's mighty fanciful intirely."

"Well, then, give me the paper."

"Give *me* the vow first, my purty hony."

"The vow! I really forget it now."

"Well, and it won't take much breath time to put it into your head again;"

and Maurteen, in a most distinct tone, repeated the terms of the proposed engagement.

"Put your little white hand over the good little heart that's beating in your body, and promise me, as you're God's own child, and hope to find favour in his sight, that you will observe every word of that vow."

Anny Kennedy performed the action, and gave, solemnly, the solemn promise required of her.

"Here, then, Miss Anny, take the paper into your kooping at last; and remember, of all things, that it comes back to my hand, if the time never falls out for giving it as 'tis directed. Cast your eye over the writen' on the outside."

Anny did observe the superscription on the rudely-folded and clumsily-sealed packet, hoping to learn the name, at least of a dreaded person; but she only rea to "The sthrange man of the Inch," i

scribed on the official document in very stiff and formal characters.

"Hide it, Miss Anny, and hide it up safe; who knows but it may be worth more nor a sack of goold to you, if the need comes to part with it!"

"Heaven defend me!" resumed Anny, still gazing on the strange credentials in her favour; "it is very alarming, that a man of sense, like you, Maurteen Maher, should really think such precaution necessary on my behalf."

"There is an ounce, or so, of sense in our head, we b'lieve, according to what the neighbours say; but, have a reliance on me, Miss Anny; remember what I have done for Peggy Carroll, and 'twill go hard if I don't do more for your sake. Depend upon it, I'll keep my little *Birdeen* flyin' to and fro, for the bare life; and I'll twist the neck of him,—and, by coorse, the head follows the neck,—if he does'nt do his duty by you

and by me. When your affairs ought to keep me waken', there will be no sleep on my eyes, any how."

Anny, still much puzzled and alarmed, renewed her expressions of thanks to his mysterious mayorship.

"Well," continued Maurteen, rubbing down his knee with his hand; "now that we have that matther settled, sure there's another little thing I want to be spaking about, Miss Anny; for it was'nt intirely on the head o' the paper and the sthrange man, that I made so bould as to sit down all alone wid you, this morning."

"I know you are my friend, Maurteen," answered Anny, "and I will attend, carefully, to whatever you have to say to me."

"Listen, then, Miss Anny. The evening o' yestherday was a very fine evening, about Wind-gap; the smell o' the new hay would have refreshed your heart, young and fresh as it is, already, not to say as if it was

as ould as mine; and there wasn't a breath of wind stirring the laves upon the threes; and the sun, when he was setting, made the sky, to the west, look as rosy as the blooming on your own soft cheek. Well, when I am a walking down by the river side on such an evening as that was, with my fishing rod in my hand, I have no envy to the greatest king that ever sat upon a throne. Of a surety, there isn't over much care to my lot,—I give thanks for the same; but, whenever care or throuble does come to me, it goes away, somehow, from my side, as I saunther along by the banks of the paceful wather; and it's a thruth, Miss Anny, take it from my lips, that a sthroll along that grassy bank, about the hour o' the sunset, will do more than make a sorrowful heart happy; it will make a happy one happier—aye, and still more than that, 'twill smoothen the wrinkle on the angry man's brow, and it will stale out of the breast of the

worldly man, in a long sigh, his envy, or his ill-will to his neighbour.

"Well, again, Miss Anny; we had a fine soft summer's evening, the last evening that's gone by; there were children laughing out loud and playing about on the hill side, and there were ould people a-sitting down to rest themselves; and they looked for all the world as if the evening of their life was the evening that the heavens sent shining and smiling all around them in pace, and in quiet, and in pleasure. But there was one man, Miss Anny, and he was a young man, into the bargain; and he ought to have been singing with the birds, and jumping through the grass, like the grasshoppers; but he hurried along as if he was runnin' from himself; and he was heedless of what was givin' the heart's joy to all others, and his brow was as dark as if a tempest had been peltin' on it; and, when I looked upon him, I thought he was the more and more

angry, because the sunny sky did not look miserable, like himself. Can you give a guess, Miss Anny, who that young man was?"

"Indeed I — I really do not know," Anny blushed and stammered.

"Well, and I won't ask of you to make the guess, my purty lady. I'll only tell you myself. That young man was Masther George Blundell. I went along in his steps when he thought no eye was on him; and he flung himself down on the grass; and he threw out his arms from him, and he moaned, and he sobbed so pitifully that it would put affliction on your young heart to listen to him; and afther I watched him some time, he bounced upon his feet, and he looked with an evil eye upon the deep wather; and there was a sickness came over me, Miss Anny; for I guessed his meaning."

"What!" cried Anny starting up with clasped hands, and looking even more pale

and terrified than ever she had done at the strange man of the Inch.

Maurteen did not very immediately reply; at length he condescended to rejoin—"No, Miss Anny—my honey child; no; he did not make away with himself that time, praises be given. I went up to him, and I spoke to him. At the first he was angered against me; he commanded me to continue on my way; he said he knew nothing about me, and that he wanted to know nothing about me, and that he liked to be left alone. But I didn't quit him, Miss Anny; I spake softly to him, with a little sense, too, may be; indeed, and in thruth, I spoke to him like one who had a feeling for him; and I had the feeling for him: and so we sat down at last, on the soft sunny bank; and he took my two ould, hard, withered hands in his: and he tould me his griefs, and then he cried like a foolish little child, and I cried too, like a more foolish and a bigger one,—just to keep him company, I suppose."

"God bless you, good man!" murmured Anny.

"Miss Anny, there is a doom before that poor boy; and he must meet it, and soon too: but if he gets bravely through it, there's happiness in store for him at last,—and for some one else with him into the bargain."

"A doom, Maurteen? what doom?"

"Och! I said what was wrong—but the word came from my mouth without thinking, and I can't tell any more, only this; he was near his doom yestherday evening, but the heavens forbid that his death should be laid to you, Mavourneen!"

"His death! his death, laid to me?"

"Masther Blundell is a youth that has hot blood round his heart, Miss Anny; with some people the grief that falls on them falls like the spring shower, and they're the better for it when it has passed away; but this isn't the way with Masther George:

the grief comes to him like a winther tempest. His love is a scorching fire; and I'm thinking that if ever his hatred falls on any one, t'will be a witherin' blast. And so, Miss Anny, while we were sitting together by the river side, he made acknowledgment to me, that when I came up, his thought was tempting him to take one good jump into it: for he was disthracted, like, because you refused to see him, and to listen to him, Miss Anny; there was grief upon him, before he knocked at your dour, yesther-day evenin', but when your word turned him away from it, it grew too much intirely for his nature to bear, although another body might be able to submit, like a christhin."

"But, Maurteen, I think I was right in refusing him, yesterday evening."

"I won't say all out, but that you did the right thing, Miss Anny; because all looks black against him; only, that is the

very rason why your anger came the sooner and the heavier on his heart. It is a great misfortune when the world turns against a man; but when our nearest and dearest turn with the world, och! my purty child, that's the heart-scalding, in downright, good arnest."

"Are you sure, asked Anny, unconsciously wrought upon by Maurteen's plausible pleadings, "that none of the wicked idea of yesterday evening remains in his mind?"

"I am, my purty young lady; he promised me that he'd pluck it up by the roots, and throw it from him—and I have a reliance on any promise out of George Blundell's lips. But I made him a promise, in return, howsomever; I promised him that I'd gain your lave and license for him to come to you, all alone, and to sit with you, all alone; that he may tell you something; and when I gave him my hand in pledge that I'd bring this about, he wanted

to go down upon his knees to thank me, and to pray for me; and in thruth I was ashamed to behould a gentleman like him goin' to demean himself before the likes o' me."

"Mr. Maurteen Maher," remarked Anny, now shaking off in a degree the effects of his worship's oratory, "it is my opinion that you might have condescended to consult me, as a party slightly concerned, before you gave that promise, and that pledge, so very confidently."

"Not a bit, my darlin' young lady—I knew well that you'd have the pity, if nothing else, in your heart for him, this morning; and that you'd give him the time and the place to say whatever he can in his own defence, in your hearing; for I knew you used to be just in your mind, as well as good in your nature; and you owed me allegiance, more betoken, as the Mayor o' Wind-gap; for though you are now livin' in the bailiwick of that poor soft-headed

cratur, in the next sthreet, you passed the airliest and some of the happiest of your days undher my rule, when you were fosther-child to Juff Carroll's good woman, that's now no more, and fosther-sister, into the bargain, to little Peggy Carroll, the purtiest and the best girl I govern over, except yourself, Miss Anny, and that I saved for you only the day afore yestherday, because she let me take my own way; the same that I ask you to let me do, this present moment."

"Well, Mr. Mayor," answered Anny, gloomily smiling at this transcendently ingenious personation—"I yield you my allegiance, at least; but still I am convinced that I ought not, under present circumstances, to hold intercourse with Mr. George Blundell. Apart from the undefended charges against him, he has given me new cause for displeasure and estrangement; yesterday evening, here in this very parlour, he insulted my guardian, Mr. Kennedy."

"My darlin', purty young crature, the scalded heart makes a fool of the poor young head. When you refused to come down to him, the boy did not know what he was sayin' or doin'; moreover, how do you know but what he wants to say to you, quite alone, between yourselves, may have something to do with them charges you spake of?"

"It would be wrong—very wrong to see him," deliberated Anny.

And what has further been predicated of the woman who deliberates? Maurteen Maher knew, though he had never read the Poet's line;—and when he saw that he had thus virtually gained his point, he did not go on arguing after convincing; he did not enter into the question of the propriety or impropriety of granting the boon he solicited, he only appealed to her compassion, representing the consequences likely to ensue should she persist in her refusal; and

finally, he obtained her full consent to a private interview with George Blundell; and left the house to communicate to his young protegé, his good tidings, with as brisk a step, and in as high spirits, as if he had succeeded in gaining, after a hard battle, some great personal favor for himself.

Declare, oh Rochefaucauld! how much, or how little of poor old Maurteen Maher's vanity, in his diplomatic talents, mingled with his feelings of justice and of benevolence, on this occasion!

CHAPTER IX.

It is evident that the circumstances under which the young people once again saw each other alone, were embarrassing. Anny felt it to be her duty, in the fullest sense a woman can do so, distinctly and unequivocally to dismiss George Blundell; for as she has herself said, the associate of a desperate libertine, nay, the partaker of his guilt, ought not for an instant to continue to be to her even as an acquaintance. Yet,

poor Anny's heart sickened at this conviction ; and final separation did not promise a less severe pang, because it became necessary to inflict it on herself.

Anny was seated, of course, at a small work-table, with an open book upon it, when George Blundell entered the room, the same, by the way, in which Mr. Kennedy had given him an audience. Immediately withinside the doorway, the young man paused, and looked deeply at her. Their eyes met. Anny had never seen her lover's face under the expression of every day merriment; she had beheld it, indeed, subdued into the gentle tenderness which her smiles could always induce ; nay, when the fulness of his joy glowed in every feature she had called it in her own mind more than sunny radiant indeed, with the consciousness of a delightful interchange of undoubting affection. And, once before this day, she had even witnessed it clouded with suffering.

But, during the look which they now gave each other, the deep-seated agony expressed by George Blundell's countenance shocked her. As he advanced, she trembled, and was unable to rise from her chair, in the formal, yet easy, manner which she had planned.

George Blundell's words came in slow and melancholy, yet not inharmonious, ca dences on her ear, like the music of a dirge.

"I perceive," he said, "my presence is painful to you; and I must therefore be the more grateful for the charity shewn me, in this permission to wait on you. However, as it is very probably the last time I shall so afflict you, I crave your indulgent hearing to what I have now to say. You reproach me with—"

"Mr. Blundell, it is not I who reproach you; nor is it my intention to do so even now; but—" she hesitated.

"What would you say? go on, dear Anny — but I am too bold in addressing you as familiarly as you have hitherto allowed me to do—am I not? I did not intend it, however, and I cannot help it; there would be something so hopeless in the sound of your name, uttered by my voice with a merely polite title before it, that my tongue refuses to make the attempt. But I ask your pardon—you stopped short in what you wished to say."

"Mr. Blundell, can you prove —*fully prove* your innocence of the things laid to your charge!"

"Anny Kennedy, I cannot," he answered slowly and miserably. "I can but make assertions to you."

"Then, sir," she resumed, rallying into spirit, "you will yourself admit the necessity of an immediate and final separation between us."

"Alas, Anny! you can find no one more ready to make that admission than I am—I do not blame you, Anny; far from it; I only blame my own fate, when I agree in the justice of the wretched sentence you pass upon me; when I myself declare that it is fit and proper you should draw back from me."

Now, although Anny had quite resolved to be stern and unflinching in her decree, it is singular enough that this ready acquiescence in it did not fail to pique her. As a matter of strict propriety, our gentle Anny determined upon dismissing her lover for ever; but her pride, and perhaps her vanity, were wounded at the thought that he allowed her manacles to drop too willingly from his hands; an argument, by the way, which did not shew that her own fetters were as loose as she might have chosen to imagine they were.

"So, sir, we have quickly come to an

understanding; and what necessity is there for a prolonged conference on this subject?"

Anny was now able to stand up.

"Do not so suddenly turn from me, Anny; permit me to fulfil the purpose for which I have intruded on you—I sought this meeting with one particular object in view; pray sit down again—or—you tacitly refuse me an opportunity for uttering a last word to you."

"Well, sir: for that alone—" and Anny resumed her judgment-seat with the severe dignity of a young "second Daniel.'—

"I will begin by saying, that I knew I never could be worthy of your love—"

"Indeed, Mr. Blundell? and should I then feel complimented that you have attempted—particularly since we all know the recent occurrences that surround you—to call forth my affection?"

"When I sought your love, my own dearest Anny, there was no stain upon me

—I could therefore not have doubted myself on that account. But this one point we will defer, if you please. Now I repeat, you act as you ought to do in receding from me. But, although I admit the justice and the necessity of my rejection, believe me, I shall experience no self-reproach in the agony to which for my life it must doom me. And Anny, dearest, it would be impossible I could live at all—indeed, life would be too oppressive a burden for me—did I not entertain the hope that your good opinion, your esteem, and your compassion will accompany me through my despair. No—indeed, Anny; nothing can soothe the peculiar misery of my lot, except the certainty that not only you do not think me the villain the world would represent me to be, but that you will pity me as the victim of that cold world's hasty opinion."

"Mr. Blundell, you have said you could give me nothing but assertions; well, sir;

do you assert yourself to be innocent of,—I must call them,—the crimes you are accused of?"

"Innocent! innocent! my beloved Anny, innocent!" he exclaimed.

"Then why are you the companion of that degraded man? why have I seen you in his company? why have I heard words pass between you? answer me," cried Anny, in rising hope.

"Anny," he replied, "you yourself have accused me, and I have been publicly accused, in this town, of having been a party to the abduction of your foster-sister, but, so help me heaven! I am as guiltless of that charge as yourself can be. As to the words you overheard, I was certainly presumptuous enough to speak of you, but without levity; without—"

"And you spoke of me to that man? you could mix up my name with his? how can you be connected with him, and still

expect to be known to me? Mr. Blundell, the recollection of that is sufficient to call on me, really, to end this irksome interview."

"All will be best understood, Anny, when you have heard a plain story; the story I am come here to tell."

"You have taken some time to introduce it, sir," she remarked, (little vixen).

"That's very probable," said George; "but now, not to tire you farther, I begin it, and, I hope, with it, my vindication."

"At my tenth year, I recollect myself living in a peasant's cottage. I was brought up with the children of the family, and after the same manner in which they were, except that I experienced a more embittered infancy and childhood. It was not concealed from me that a paternal roof did not cover me; but where I was to seek that roof no one would tell me. Before I was ten years old, I sometimes used to ask who were my father and mo-

ther? but the unkindly people at the cottage only laughed, at first, at my enquiries, or beat me for making them; until, at length, when I had tormented them beyond patience, they replied, to my young ears, that I was a child of whom my parents were ashamed, and whom they brought up for charity. In fact, Anny, I was considered as an incumbrance, in even that lowly house; and worse, they branded me with a disgraceful name: I was ill-treated by the old; I was scorned by the young. My nature was made morose, my temper sour, and often savage. My tender days were spent in wretchedness; and never since have I been able wholly to free my mind of the premature gloom and bitterness cast upon it by those early scenes.

"One lad only, in my neighbourhood, treated me with kindness; and I have often since thought that the heart within me must have become dead, as a kind of moral petrifaction, but that it expanded to him, in

return for his gentleness to me. Upon one occasion, when some four or five other boys were at play, and when I looked on, as was my custom, without playing with them, my generous friend was attacked, upon some misunderstanding, by a lad, stronger and older than himself. I took his quarrel upon me; and, although my antagonist was also my physical superior in every way, I had not time to count odds. Before that day, I had scarce ever stood up, on my own account, against an insult, because the consciousness of my humiliating position weighed me down like lead. But," continued George Blundell, interrupting himself, "I fatigue you, Anny?"

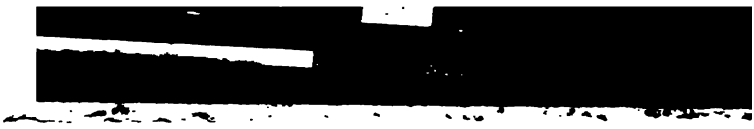
"No, no, no;—pray go on," she said.

"Well, I became the conqueror on this occasion; but I was sorely bruised and battered; and the little fellow, for whom I had fought, attended on me to cure my wounds. The other boys envied me for my success,

and, still retaining their malevolent uncharitableness against me, would provoke me into fresh quarrels. My blood got up, and I offered to encounter them all, one by one; but, out of their virtuous detestation, I suppose, they, at last, fell upon me, nearly all together, and I could only defend myself as well as I was able, against their united blows.

"During this unequal contest, I was unconscious that a stranger had been looking on, an unbiassed witness of the tyranny practised upon me, and of my vain efforts to resist it. But that stranger, to my astonishment, suddenly became my protector, judiciously using his cane to disencumber me of my cowardly assailants.

"When they had retired, and that we were alone, he enquired my birth and parentage. At first, I would not reply to him at all; gradually he drew reluctant and tearful, though true, answers from me. At my account, I saw him start and frown;



and then he took my hand, and asked me to lead him to the house where I resided. I did so,—we entered the mean abode. I was in rags, and otherwise very badly taken care of. I heard my mysterious protector disputing angrily with the proprietor of my churlish place of refuge. I heard my name mentioned, and understood that I was the subject of their debate. Finally, the stranger called me—his son! his lawful son, he said I was! Oh, Anny! when I heard this, I cannot tell you how my young heart exulted! and well do I remember the boyish assumption of lofty demeanour which I put forward, after *I* had summoned sufficient courage to call *him* father. Little shew of fatherly kindness did he then afford me; but his mere countenancing the poor despised boy was sufficient to arouse all the dormant fondness of my nature for him; and when he told me that his name was Blundell, and that I must forget that by

which I had hitherto been called, (the name of the family with whom I had been living) and assume his, I thought myself absolutely ennobled.

"My father immediately had me conveyed into a neighbouring village, and there he clothed me well, and fed me daintily; at his departure, which shortly after occurred, he placed me at a respectable school; and, two years afterwards, in my twelfth year, I was removed, at his command, though he did not then come back to me, to the college of this town. At our first meeting, he had told me he was a merchant, possessing great wealth in a foreign country; that he had left Ireland, while yet young, in consequence of my mother's death; that he had no child but me; and that I was to be the sole inheritor of a large fortune. I never questioned the truth of this story; and the liberal supplies of money regularly remitted to me, in his name seemed fully to prove it.

"For many years I did not again behold my parent; not, in fact, till about three months ago. Then, however, Anny, I received a message to attend him, at a house which he had just taken, in the neighbourhood of this city; and now, Anny, do you begin to pity me?"

"Are you at liberty to declare who he is?" asked Anny, growing very pale.

"I will declare it to *you*, Anny, at any risk," answered George Blundell, most sorrowfully, tears trickling from his eyes—"'The strange Man of the Inch,' is my father."

"Dear George, I do—I do, indeed, pity you," resumed Anny, suddenly extending her hand, and more than responding to the measure of his tears.

"God bless you, Anny," cried George, as he almost reverently touched her hand with his lips—"but you perceive at once, that on this wretched fact, I rest my vindi-

cation against the foul calumnies cast upon me."

"I understand it clearly, dear George."

"You may have overheard us speaking together in the lane, near his house. I was conscious that you must have known of the imputations in question; and I was praying of him to permit me to confide to you the secret of my birth, in order that you might understand why I had been discovered in his company at the bonfire. He sternly and threateningly repelled my prayer; but I now make the disclosure, in the teeth of his commands; because it is of less consequence to me to inherit his wealth, did he possess the produce of all the mines hid in the bowels of this round world, than, for one single day, to sink in your estimation. And I sought a private interview with you, because I durst not tell my secret to any other person."

"He wishes, then, that your consangui-

nity shall remain unknown?" demanded Anny.

"He does. Three months ago, when for the second time in my life I met him, we had not been many minutes together before he gave me to understand as much; adding, that the fact of even ordinary intimacy between us must be hidden from the world, and that, whenever we saw each other, it must be without witnesses, or else personally disguised."

"Did you ask his reasons for this unaccountable mystery?"

"I did, Anny—over and over—in vain. I found him a rough, peremptory man; he said the measure was necessary; was his will and pleasure, and that he should be obeyed; nor did he fail to remind me that even for my very bread I was at his mercy, and that disobedience on my part, and abandonment on his, should be cause and consequence."

There is self-evidence in the accents of truth; there is a blandness about sincerity, which is its own guarantee against doubt and disbelief in the hearts of those to whom it addresses itself.—Anny fully credited the story she heard, and her looks and manner towards the narrator were almost as kind as ever.

"Anny, behold the situation in which I am placed," the young man continued. "Although a stern and a dictatorial father, he has been a kind and liberal one to me, ever since the moment he rescued me from poverty and degradation; and, exclusive of my gratitude to him for having given me a station in the world, with education, and means to support it, it is my creed, my religious, conscientious creed, that, except for the commission of an evil act, we are bound to yield honour and obedience to—no matter what may be his private character,—a parent. To you indeed, Anny, I break the

commands laid upon me, in the present instance, because I feel, because I am sure, that the loss of your esteem were a warrant for self-destruction. But you will guard my secret; it is unnecessary for me to remark that you will—"

"I will, George Blundell," she said, "since I ought to do so for your interests."

"Putting completely out of view all worldly interests," he resumed, "I am bound to keep my father's secret, because he has commanded me to do so—am I not, Anny?"

"I should think so," she replied, though with a little hesitation, "yet in what fearful difficulties does it involve you!"

"Yes, Anny; I must be content to bear even infamy, while I do my duty."

"'Tis all very strange, and very unfortunate, dear George—may I ask you one question? do you think that public report wrongs your father?"

"I have dared to speak with him on the subject—he says he is not guilty of the things laid to his charge—he has stormed and raved at me for supposing the contrary to be the case; and, he adds, that his necessarily mysterious mode of life has subjected him to the gossip of the censorious and foolish vulgar, and that the misdeeds of others are undeservedly heaped upon him."

"Do you believe him?" again questioned Anny.

"Oh! that I could answer you that I did, Anny — but alas! alas! facts tending to disprove his words have come to my knowledge; deep, deep, in my bosom, I feel a horrid misgiving that report speaks truly of him; and that my father, *my father*, Anny, is a man of evil ways. And, taking this to be the fact — supposing it for an instant to be the fact, observe, Anny—observe how I am situated—as I am, must either submit to be considered as the accom-

plice of a man who, in this little quarter of the world, is openly called a desperado—I must do this, not admitting the connection of father and son between us; or, admitting it, I must abandon him, and say to the world, 'You are all right! this is the bravo and the evil man—' and, to save myself from social disgrace, I, his son, cast him off!"—again the young man became deeply affected and silent.

"Fearful indeed, dear George," said Anny, again giving her hand.

"And what should I gain even by this last course? what should even you gain, my adored Anny, supposing my lot and yours to go hand in hand, after it? why, I gain nothing but the base reputation of being the son of a depraved and detested individual; and you, nothing but the sharing of that reputation—if indeed I could ask you to encounter it. But I am here at present to tell you that I will not ask you to en-

counter it; to tell you that George Blundell's heart will eat itself away, in hopeless agony, before he asks you to change, for the worse, your present position of honour, of good and of virtue."

"Thank you, George—thank you, dear, dear George," sobbed Anny.

"No- dearest — I would not afford to the world, even at the risk of all my own worldly happiness, the opportunity to point one little finger against you; yet, you see to whichever side I turn, that world has the power, and indeed, according to its own laws, the right to scorn me. Oh, Anny, Anny, I have been foolishly proud of my own good name! and I have exulted in the consciousness of possessing, from the hand of God, a mind stored with many of the treasures which the poet, the historian, and the sage, offered to me for the gathering! Yes, Anny, and I have idolized the lovely forms of nature, and the lovelier

features of virtue: all displayed before me by the hand of that God; and I have turned with loathing from (I will only call it now) the disagreeable front of vice—and yet, at last, to be, without fault of mine, levelled with the vicious; to be classed with those minds which are made up but of a mass of sluggish matter, or of mere matter of a worse kind; to be classed with those who can laugh when they commit sin and outrage — and, by the indulgence of habits equally common to them and to the terminable brute, plodding with prone visage over the earth—who live themselves with that brute—nay, sink below him! Oh Anny, dearest Anny, this is affliction, indeed!"

"It is indeed, dear George," she said, in a voice of deep commiseration; "but, do you not think that you at present express yourself as if the mere name of virtue, and as if the mere reputation of high attainment, were equally important

as those qualities themselves? do you not, in the present instance, seem to set as high a value upon the shadow as upon the substance?"

"You speak to me," answered George, "as you have always done, my own dear Anny, like a soothing, and yet a correcting, angel. I do not know what to say further. I will, however, recur to one thing that I glanced at, when we first began this conversation. You remember I told you that from the very commencement of our ac-acquaintance, I felt I never could be worthy of your affection; and indeed, Anny, that's true; for there was about you a something of nature, and of goodness, and of purity, which surrounded me like a clear spring atmosphere — giving me the power to admire and to enjoy, but finding me deficient in any equivalent return. And it was therefore only that I always feared I could never obtain your love.

But when I did obtain it! Oh my God! what a change came over me! — what a change for earthly happiness! all that, however, has passed away. I may still continue to believe that you love me; but, as I have more than once said, I *must*, for your own dear, dear sake, reject that love, even though you were about to renew its promise to me. You shall not, Anny, pass along the streets of this town, and encounter a single human being who could say of you, 'That is the wife of the son of the bravo.' Anny, I do not yet understand my father; and in this avowal, perhaps, exists the full force of my present despair. For, Anny, disreputable as we all know him to be, here, in this neighbourhood, I have deeper fears of him. I have fears that extend beyond this place; nay, beyond our native country: I have fears of him, that I dare not express even to myself! and therefore, Anny, I say over again, and I say it more decidedly than

ever, from this moment you can have nothing to do with me—you *must* have nothing to do with me, except the affording me your full belief in my innocence, and in all the facts I have submitted to you; and then your full pity for my future lot—when, in consequence of those facts, and indeed, even of that innocence, I shall be for ever separated from you."

George Blundell, who had been standing up, during the latter part of his speech, sunk down exhausted and spiritless on a chair.

Anny had shed tears during his recital —at present she did not weep. She looked upon her old friend with uncurbed admiration; with admiration of his sentiments, of his principles, and we fear, indeed, of the graceful energy of his expression of them, as well as of the alternate flashing and sinking of his bold manly eye. Even after he had ceased to speak, she seemed to

listen to him. In an instant, however, she leaned her forehead upon her hand and, half turning from him, bent herself towards the table; the deep-black, glossy ringlets that had previously half-covered her throat and neck, now hanging perpendicularly and veiling her countenance. The young pair were for some time silent. At length, Anny quickly raised her head; tossed her hair back again upon her shoulders, and spoke; at first in a tremulous voice, then firmly, and eventually with intense pathos.

"George—" she said, and the young man bent eagerly towards her—"I give full belief and credit to every word that you have spoken in your vindication—"

"May God, bless you, Anny, for that word!"

"And I think it necessary to state my full belief as a kind of necessary preface to what I must further declare. I have endeavoured to follow a certain train of thought, and as

you have been candid, and have expressed yourself most distinctly towards me, I may surely take up the same tone towards you. Dearest George—you sought my love — I gave it to you; and when I did so, no thought of mine was influenced by worldly considerations. Indeed, George, in it you had a gift as unsophisticated, as warm, and yet as pure a gift, as ever a young girl gave to man, while, for the first time, yielding up her heart's affections. I am not ashamed to say, nor do I fear to flatter you, when I declare that I bestowed that love upon virtue; upon high-mindedness; upon talent; upon genius; to say nothing of personal recommendation, or of your most sincere attachment to me. Nay, hear me out, George Blundell, for, I repeat, I do not speak to flatter you. Before these last few black days, nothing could have changed me towards you, except a discovery of your being less worthy than I supposed you to be of my

deeply-trusting partiality — since then I have doubted. But, upon this day I discover nothing that can give me a disagreeable impression of you — and, therefore, I am, as I have been ever towards you, dearest George."

George sprang from his seat, and was getting himself into some dilemma of grateful gallantry.

"No, no—" she said, "stand up—take a chair and sit by me if you will—" (what *did* he do?) "I have now candidly told you the opinions of my mind, and the feelings of my heart; and if they are any consolation to you, remember them and accept of them. But I cannot disguise from myself, meantime, that a woman has other duties than those of love to perform. I must not too hastily sink myself in the world's esteem—there, dear George, I agree with you, though you have manfully anticipated me. No; you are right—no—we must not be hasty—

you have said that, on my account, you would not enter the world with me, an object of neglect—I say for you, that I will not allow you, from this hour, any opportunity to tempt me to do so;—while the present cloud hangs over you, we must cease to be even private acquaintances—But rest satisfied with this assurance, I have loved you for you own qualities—and I will not now change towards you, because unmerited misfortune has placed you in questionable circumstances. I will not, now—I will not ever. I will love none other but you; I will wed none other but you. Brighter days must surely beam on us at last, and leave us free to smile at the social usages which at present doom our separation. I cannot, will not, believe but that you will soon become enabled to reassert yourself in your own true character. But if," continued Anny, "and let my last words sink deepest in your memory,

me does *not* stand your friend; if you
oo long kept down by the necessity
ur strange lot, then, George Blundell,
to me again, and again call me your
own Anny."

CHAPTER X.

THE house at the Inch, the scene of the tragedy, with which we are becoming more particularly acquainted, was an old family mansion, built in the graceless style of architecture pretty generally adopted in Ireland in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign; a square structure, of which each side terminated in a pointed and towering gable, while each gable was surmounted by a formidable chimney. At that side, where

the stone-jambed, massive, hall-door gave entrance to the dwelling, the windows had been placed with some degree of uniform arrangement; but at its other sides they were up and down, here and there, great and small; as if, after the first construction of the house, whim or necessity, rather than pre-concerted design, had dictated their relative positions. The walls were very massive, and all the principal rooms wainscoated.

Into the largest room of the second story of this famous house, we now enter, upon a visit to its as famous present proprietor.

The furniture around us is old, lumbering, and much decayed. The walls and floor of the apartment itself have been but indifferently reclaimed from a former state of almost dilapidation; and, although four large wax tapers burn on a carved table in its centre, there is the uncomfortable air of a mixture of luxury and unfitness, of ornament and blemish, nay, even

of the want of order, or of common attention to order, visible at every side.

"The strange Man of the Inch" sat alone at the massive carved table. A half-drained silver goblet, richly chased, was before him. The bottle from which he had filled it, and another, which he had previously emptied, were to his hand; and a delf mug, with a handle near the neck—one of those called a "grey beard"—stood in the middle of the board.

An embroidered purple velvet cap, sat, not inelegantly, on his head. He was regaling himself with a gigantic pipe, which, after many convolutions, rested on the floor at his feet; it was indeed a machine of exotic fashion, and formed, in the eyes of his neighbours, one of the objects which, taken as appendages to him, challenged their curiosity and enquiry, if not their fears. His brow was closely knitted over his deep, black eye, as if, even in solitude,

it would hide and concentrate its own meaning; while, ever and anon, he puffed from his curving lip, the vapour of perfumed tobacco.

The door of the apartment slowly, and, it might be said, sneakingly opened. "The strange Man" turned towards it his keen, searching eye. A tall and bulky fellow, enveloped in a large, loose wrapper of blue freize, which disguised his person, stood beyond the threshold.

"So, Bourke!—is that you?—Advance;" said the "strange Man," sonorously.

His clumsy visitor, plodding forward with a heavy step, removed his slouched hat from his bushy brow.

"Sit you down, sit you down, Bourke," continued the "strange Man," pointing to a seat distant from the table;—"Sit down, and make love to 'grey beard.'"

"*Dhar-a-lourea!* * an' who'll say it isn't

* An imprecation.

the mouth-wather that hasn't its match ?"—the man remarked, after he had applied the mug to his lips, and gulped a sufficient quantity of its contents:—"An' I'll let out the thruth; the love an' the likin' that I have for it, * *bates Bannachar*"—and to exemplify his statement, he once more pressed his lips to the lips of the "grey beard." He then rested the vessel on the table, embracing it with his great hands as if he claimed it as his own, smacking his mouth, and grinning hugely and hideously.

The "strange Man" smoked on, without a change of countenance, as if abstractedly, or indifferently, or perhaps contemptuously, though without the expression of that feeling. Bourke fixed his large grey eyes upon him, and, by degrees, also grew serious. There was silence for some time. At length the "strange Man's" glance suddenly encountered that of the other, and in a loud,

* Goes beyond expression.

sharp voice, while he struck his foot upon the floor, he as suddenly demanded—"Bourke! is there a traitor among ye?"

"By the gor," answered the fellow, collectedly, although at first he had been rather startled—"not to my knowin,' or to the knowledge of me, masther."

"Not to your knowing!—Are you not certain?—positively certain, one way or the other?"

"I'll take book-oath on it,—an' may this **lauchy* liquor be my pison, afore I close an eye, if I'm tellin' you a word of a lie, at the prasent time."

"And you have not discovered who pirated the girl from the summer-house, in the garden, where she had been so safely stowed away?"

"No, masther; we lost all marks and tokens of her in the town. But wait a bit, wait a bit; all is not lost that's in danger;

* Lovely—generous.

and what a body can't see a good way off to-day, because there's bad weather between a body and it, a body may be able to see to-morrow, when the sun takes away the clouds, and lets a body's eyes do their naathral business."

"Bourke — there is some one on the watch, that we don't count among ship's crew. There is some stranger, I tell you, knows more of our tacks than he ought to know. I ask you again, sirrah,—and now have a care of your answer—Is there, or is there not a skulking traitor amongst you?"

"*Dhar-a-loursa* — A thraithor! — What business would such a one have to be rubbin' to us?—Would he see the sun two mornin's afther we found out what he was, I wondher?" And, to intimate his meaning, he slowly took out of his bosom a large, clumsily-shaped pistol, laid it on the table, and scowled at it:—"And let him be ould Nick, or ould Nick's mother, or even a christhin,

of any sort, that is lookin' too close at us, I'd have him be on his guard, masther, honey."

"Bourke! had I time to spare for him, he should not, whoever he is, long remain hidden from me, were the earth heaped five fathoms above him. But for the present we must content ourselves with knowing that there *is* some meddling eye fixed on us, and watching our motions; that there *is* some clever hand,—(or at least some hand that thinks itself clever) — interfering in our affairs; and *that* is quite enough to make me push on the matter we have last been speaking about, with the more speed and spirit. Bourke, I can afford no longer delay. By the time I have mentioned, *that one* must be safely conveyed to the place you know of."

"I'd wager a silver shillin' against a brass farthen," answered Mr. Bourke, "that the boy that 'ud thry to keep her from us

might have a chanch of getting his garthers knotted round his throat, instead of above his knee, jolly masther."

"Well, then; be prepared, all of you, ye scoundrels; and, mind me; there must be no bungling this time, if you wish to walk about the world with your heads on your shoulders;—do you hear me?"

"I do; and, by this blessed mouth-wather," pursued Bourke, again kissing the lips he adored most—"you may sleep asy on id, I tell you."

"And *I* tell *you*, man, that on this occasion I will not endure disappointment. I did not care a great deal for the loss of that other, whom ye all let slip through your fingers so confoundedly; and, therefore, I half forgave ye, and let ye go unpunished; but, at your peril, let me find neither treachery nor mismanagement in the business now in hand; if I should detect any such thing, it is not merely the loss of my bounty you

shall have to dread; but were there a dozen of you, each armed with a pistol, like that before you, loaded to the muzzle, and the muzzles of all pointed to my breast, every man of you should feel that I was still your master, and able to be quits with you."

"Shadhurth;—I'll dhrink to you on the bargain."

And here, because we do not very much relish their society, we will leave "the strange Man of the Inch" and his worthy associate to arrange their plans; and with the reader's permission, change the scene.

CHAPTER XI.

ANNY Kennedy had not the slightest recollection of her father; and of her mother but a very dreamy one remained on her mind. She remembered a weeping, delicate female, taking care of her early childhood, whom she used to call mamma, and her most vivid reminiscences of this individual were mixed up with painful and mysterious feelings. She could relate her efforts to scramble up upon a bed, in which the lady lay, as it had

been her wont to do ; her agonies at having been held back by a mild, compassionate-looking man, whose kindness of manner, and whose endeavours to soothe her childish grief, partly reconciled her to the opposition she experienced from him. And Anny's memory was further strongly impressed with the mode finally adopted to console her: having succeeded in pacifying her a little, the gentleman led her back, repressingly, however, to the bed she had vainly tried to scale, and the person resting in it placed a ribbon round her neck, to which was attached a shining bauble that pleased her childish eye ; nor did Anny, at this day, forget the fervent kiss, and the straining embrace accompanying the gift.

Soon after this, she was led by the mild-looking man to a strange residence, of which the novelty, and, indeed, the splendour, delighted her ; but she grew tired of the excitement, and cried to be taken back to her

mother. This request was not, however, complied with; and she experienced, for some time, much misery; but, at last, she became unconsciously reconciled to the idea of a final separation. Anny yet wore the little present she had received from her dying parent: it was a very small double miniature, having on one side, as she had since been told, the portrait of her father, and, on the other, that of her mother; and she now distinctly understood that the placid man, who had gained such influence over her, at the moment of her infantine tribulation, at the bed-side of her dying mother, was Mr. Connor Kennedy, with whom she had since lived, who had adopted her as his daughter, and to whose considerable property she was to be sole heiress.

What object beneath the blessed sun is more lovely, more endearing, than that of a little child, bustling about, no matter how imperfectly, as to its success, but still con-

fidently full of a belief of its power to render to middle age its little services, in proof of its great love? If not the truest, is it not the purest, proof of the heart's affection? is it not an evidence, bursting out of the bosom of that child, of the great principle of its creation, and, only let the world not spoil it, of its eternally-willed destiny? If love be not the sole, true motive for our genuine attentions to one another, why should that little child so powerfully exemplify the fact that it is? The fairy creature is not yet tutored upon a necessity for pleasing;—it pleases because it is pleased: its little spirit is fresh from the impress, the caress, the embrace, of its God;—its God of love immeasurable! — that is, immeasurable by our mere human feelings of what *we* call love. Answer us, any one who is a parent, what love, at any more advanced period, is equal to the love of that little child?

Oh! it is indeed delightful to behold the innocent eyes, beaming with affectionate earnestness; the other little features sobered into business-like gravity, full of the importance of being occupied for one it loves; and then playing in brilliant joy when the labour of love is applauded by a kiss.

Much of this rather egotistical eulogy of childhood has been called forth by Anny Kennedy, and is, in a great degree, applicable to her. Even in her earliest days, the patient melancholy of Mr. Kennedy's countenance, its expression of a calm endurance of misfortune, excited Anny's unconscious sympathy, and her young heart felt, unknowingly, a claim preferred upon it for consolation. She would even now call to mind that the chief happiness of those days used to be caused by seeing her guardian's sad features relax into a smile, as the result of her efforts to soothe and please him.

As she grew up, Anny took delight in the performance of little personal services for him. She would be sure to run about the house to find his night-cap, and would arrange it on his head with her own little hands; she would kneel down and fit on his slippers; and, in her opinion, no one but herself could settle the cushions of his arm-chair, or place it in the exact spot he liked, either by the fire in winter, or near the window, overlooking the garden, in summer.

Upon the evening of the day of George Blundell's visit to her, as related in the last chapter, Anny and Mr. Kennedy were, as usual, enjoying each other's society; and they had been for some time discussing the nature of the present new position of her and her lover.

Even on this delicate topic, Anny saw no reason for disguising her thoughts from her guardian. There was something so soft

and touching about his manner and character, something so nearly resembling the gentleness of her own sex, that a confidence of a most unqualified nature had always existed between them. And, to assist in establishing this understanding, never had Mr. Kennedy used a word or a sound of harshness towards Anny; and the idea of being reserved with him could not enter into her thoughts.

From the beginning of her intimacy with George Blundell, her guardian had scarce ever hesitated to question her upon the state of her feelings, nor Anny to express them. The last remarkable interview between the lovers was, therefore, talked over by Kennedy's fire-side, without, as we have before intimated, the slightest reservation, except, we are bound to admit, in one instance.

Anny had given her solemn promise that she would guard the secret of George Blundell's explanation of his intimacy with the

disreputable person lately come into their neighbourhood; and was compelled, therefore, to conceal the mystery from her old confidante.

"And yet, Anny, although you will not account to me why it is you are so satisfied of his innocence, yet you will have me go the full length of agreeing with you in your conviction of it."

"Exactly so, my dear sir."

"He has bound you to honourable secrecy?"

"He has, Sir: in my mind and heart I rely upon the statements George Blundell has made; and even if he had not wished me to guard his secret, there is that about it connected with my good wishes towards him, which I believe would seem to compel me to be as prudent on the matter, even with you, as you now find me."

"Anny, his wishing you to remain silent is, in itself, a circumstance full of suspicion,

in the young man's conduct. If his exculpation will bear scrutiny, why is it to be hidden from every one, except the person most likely to take it upon mere trust?"

"Should I attempt to give you any answer," said Anny, "I must run the risk of, at all events, hinting what I am bound not to breathe a word of."

"Well, Anny, perhaps you can satisfy me upon one single point;—did Mr. Blundell make it appear quite satisfactory to you that he had no intimate connection with that very doubtful character, called the strange Man of the Inch?"

"My dear sir," continued Anny, after a short pause, "I am sure that, without the slighest breach of trust, I may reply to your present interrogatory. Instead of denying an intimate connection with this man, he openly avowed it to me; yet, upon the nature of that connection he rests his chief defence against the charge of participation

in the acts in which they are supposed to be jointly concerned; and here, again, I must add, I am not at liberty to explain further."

"Very, very strange, indeed," mused Mr. Kennedy.

"I admit it is, sir; yet, if my judgment be not very shallow, I think I thoroughly understand the case; and, indeed, I can confidently say that, to my own mind, George's acquittal is not pronounced by me on a hasty examination, or upon untenable grounds."

"You may feel all this to be very true, Anny, as matters appear to you, and as you feel they ought to be; but, dear child, your heart has not been unemployed in forming your decision; and I fear, much fear, that the pretending head is more frequently its partizan, than its judge, when appealed to, perseveringly, by that courageous little tempter."

"Indeed, sir, and is this the case?"

"Anny, dear Anny, I vouch to you my own experience in proof of my assertion. Alas! too well I know how unnerved the reasoning power becomes, when the heart tampers with its decisions. Oh! how filmed and warped then is the vision of the understanding! how inevitably does it deceive itself! Oh, Anny! it will deck the brow of a barren precipice with flowers, to hinder itself from seeing the gulph below, as well as to entice itself to its edge; and on—on—its dupe will rush exulting in a certainty of his clean-sightedness, until he reels and falls, for ever, ever falls, in his eagerness to pluck the visionary decoration! Anny, my dear child, I have, as I intimated to you, experienced something like this: forgive me, then, if I impugn your young judgment until I can examine, with my own eyes, the foundation on which it rests."

"Dear sir," resumed Anny, "though,

perhaps, not now with as much firmness of manner as she had hitherto displayed, "I can only repeat that, were I at liberty to detail his defence, you would deliver, with me, a verdict of acquittal in favour of George Blundell."

"And, Anny, *I* can only repeat, that until I know his defence as intimately as you do, I must withhold my verdict. I believe you will not call me an uncharitable man, and yet this is my conclusion."

"My dearest friend," cried Anny, with tears in her eyes, "what living creature can call you that? to me you are charity personified."

"My poor child!" answered Mr. Kennedy, mournfully, "even the fervour of the flattery you now offer me is proof that the affectionate little tenant of your bosom is more than a match for your too complying reason. Ever do you over-rate my claims to any thing like good qualities, and you have

no eye for the deep and visible blemishes of my character. Listen to me, dear Anny, even yet I am unwillingly bound to say that I consider this young man as an unfit visitor here."

"I have, myself, told him the same, sir; he is not to visit me at all; nay, communication of every kind is to cease between us, until he shall be able to prove his innocence to the world's full face."

"Thank you, my dear, thank you—" Mr. Kennedy took her hand.

"Or until, sir,"—Anny blushed and hesitated.

"Well, my dear child? or until——"

"That is, sir, unless the world continue to condemn him, without reason, for an unreasonably long period; and, in such a case, Sir, and when there is no friend left to him, but myself,"—she paused again.

"O my poor Anny! I thought as much—heart, heart alone, child, has been your

counsellor. I admire the noble confidence of your nature. I acknowledge the great value of your sentiment, in the abstract; but I fear its present prudence. You will believe me, Anny, I can have nothing but your dear happiness in view; but I will demonstrate to you, Anny, that the heart's promptings alone are not to be taken as guide to the right and the fit: and I will do this by laying before you the example of one who has been their victim, their most miserable victim.—Dear child, in the hope that I may be your warning, I will give you the history of my own secret griefs, although the recital of them may inflict a first keen wound on your affectionate heart; and although it probe anew those which, for half my life, have been festering in mine."

"Dear, dear sir," pleaded Anny; "I have always forborne to question you on this subject, because, giddy as I am, I could just discriminate enough to perceive that the retrospect would be most distressing to

you; and do not now, I entreat you, my friend and my father, cause yourself pain on my account. Whatever your counsel may be, I will follow it merely because you offer it, assured as I am that you will never advise me against my affections, if those affections deserve your sanction."

"My good and sensible child, notwithstanding my long repugnance, evident even to yourself, to enter into the secrets of the dark past, I have lately begun to feel, while thinking it might be necessary for your instruction, that the effort might prove pleasing as well as painful to me. Besides, the making you my confidante, now, in your mature years, appears as a promise of some late consolation to me. Moreover, when friendship lends us an ear, it may, perhaps, be selfish and wrong for ever to hide even our misfortunes; and well I know, dear Anny, that a commiserating friend is to listen to my disclosures,—a true, a commiserating friend."

Anny, her tearful eyes resting upon his, raised his hand to her lips.

"Yes, yes, my child;—no use of words to give me an assurance. Indeed, for some years I have had the intention of confiding my cares to you, and what time for doing so can be fitter than the present, when I see a probability of your suffering from causes resembling those to which I owe my own wretched earthly lot?"

CHAPTER XII.

"You are not ignorant, my child, of the light in which the world regards me. While you were yet a little girl, I well remember your running home to me one day, with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes, after your defence of me against the charges of a young companion, and I remember, too, that the moment you saw me, you not only repeated all that had been said, but proclaimed your own generous disbelief of the

calumnies; and on that occasion, Anny, I declared to you that I had been much belied, and now I solemnly repeat the assertion. You know by whom I was rescued from poverty and neglect; and you also know that the world accuses me of the blackest ingratitude and of the most hideous treachery, in return for the obligations heaped upon me by my cousin, Harry Stokesbury. Anny, the world seldom sees but the surface of things. Motives for actions, it will scarce go to the trouble of calculating; and where there is room for conjecture, condemnation follows, instead of extenuation—no matter—with that hasty and uncharitable world I have had for twenty years no communication. It has judged me as it thought proper, and I have remained silent towards it, and secluded from it, with you, at our little hearth. Its sympathy I could not expect to find; its pleasures had no attraction for me; in a word, I have

left it to deal with me as it pleased, and very, very hardly it *has* dealt with me.

"Henry Stokesbury most generously rescued me from early distress; and, indeed, with his patronage, he gave me his affection. Did I only hate him in return? No—my dear child—he had my love for his love; and although in one lamentable instance I accuse my weak nature of having done him wrong—yes—a wrong it was, however unwilled or unintended by me—yet in all others I was his true, loving cousin, and grateful friend.

It is said of me that I fomented the quarrel between my benefactor and his father, for the purpose of grasping my cousin's patrimony. Oh! dear Anny—that is very, very untrue. I declare to you, my child, and it is the first time that I have ever opened my lips in self exculpation, that whatever human ingenuity could devise, whatever the most ardent friendship could

suggest, I tried in order to reconcile the father and son. But all my efforts were unavailing; the old man died in his rage; and, as evidence of its uncooled force, disinherited his only child—bequeathed his property to me, comparatively a stranger, and, frightful to add, Anny, with almost his last breath, cursed his offspring. But, my child, from the moment I became possessor of that property, nothing was ever farther from my thoughts than to take advantage of the angry bequest, which legally made it mine.—The vengeance of my cousin burst on me unawares, before explanation could be offered to him; had this not been the case, he would have learned that every shilling of his own had been treasured up for him; it was, in fact, my intention to have put into his hands an authenticated account, after having burned his father's will in his presence. But he had scarce heard one sound of my voice, when he left

me unable to utter another—nay—he parted from his country before I was sufficiently recovered to speak with him, or even to write to him. For even, upon the unhappy public occasion which doomed his expatriation, I could not appear. Thank God, at any rate, for having been saved from such a terrible exhibition of my feelings!

"The world wonders, Anny, why I have lived, and why I do live, so much within my apparent income. But to this hour, never have I applied to my own uses one penny of Harry Stokesbury's fortune; and when I am gone, it will be seen that I have stored up its annual produce, encreasing it, even, by every means; and that the manner of its final appropriation cannot be called unjust: on account of our humble expenditure in this house, dear Anny, I have not, in truth, dispensed more than half of the interest of my wife's fortune. And for all this, you have nothing but my word, Anny; but I am

assured that, with you, my word is sufficient warrant of the truth.

"But there is another matter, my child, regarding which, I wish my conscience could bear me out as courageously as it does upon the subject I have just spoken of; and here it is that, by continuing my story, I hope to instruct your heart, Anny, and to warn it to examine carefully the present state of its inclinations.

"By a clause in old Mr. Stokesbury's will, I was to be his heir, only on the condition of espousing his ward, Mary Bryan. My censurers assert that when the will became declared, I wedded her, in order to ensure her guardian's property, as well as her own. But such was not the case, and I have more than my assertions to offer at present, Anny. The registry of this parish, compared with the date of the will, proves that I was Mary Bryan's husband two months before that will was known to be in existence.

"Now, Anny, give me all your attention. As the ward of the elder Stokesbury, poor Mary Bryan lived under the same roof with him, young Harry and myself. Oh! Anny—if ever an angel's spirit animated a most beauteous human form, it did that of Mary! All mildness and all gentleness, all goodness and all loveliness, were expressed by her heavenly blue eyes—kind as it was radiant, her smile ever beamed on; so soft, and thrilling was her girl's voice, that it came upon your ear with the witching influence of that of the fabled syren's. And this glorious young being was, by her father's dying command, to wive with her cousin, Harry Stokesbury.

"Harry may have loved her,—nay, it is impossible but that he must have loved her; but to tell you that I loved her, Anny, would be a foolish endeavour to define, by cold words, the perfect prostration of heart and soul, of mind and existence, with which

I bowed me down before her. But, Anny, I do most solemnly and most sincerely asseverate to you, my good, dear child, as well as to the face of my God, who hears me, that, day and night, hour by hour, with incessant effort and effort, I struggled and struggled to repress every, the slightest, symptom of the gigantic passion which devoured me! For, first, it appeared to me the wildest presumption to calculate even a remote possibility of winning from such a creature a return of love;—and then came the sense of what an atrocious sin it would be in me to tempt even that impossibility, by the manifestation of a thousandth, thousandth part of what I felt for her. Indeed, indeed, Anny, to this hour, after the most careful, and, God knows, frequent examination of myself, I am quite sure that, until a certain period to which I must shortly refer, I never gave her cause by act, word, or look, to suspect my attachment.

"But oh! Anny,—the tortures of that time of self-repression! In the silence of the night, in my bed; in the solitude of nature, at mid-day, I have experienced over and over, the desolating contest of duty with love, of smiting conscience with raging passion! Tears, bitter tears, always proclaimed, however, at what side victory declared herself—and then I have lain, bodily-exhausted, as I was heart-hopeless.

"Some of the temptings of my spirit prompted me to ask myself the question—"*Does* Harry indeed love her?"—and I would foolishly, perversely answer—"No—he does not!—Where are the proofs of his affection?—of such an affection as Mary ought to command from all—of such an affection as she commands from me?" And then I would go on, idiot-like, till I had half convinced myself that he cared nothing for his affianced bride. "He at all times accosts her freely," I continued, "and never

is embarrassed in her presence; I tremble from head to foot, not daring to raise my eyes to hers, if occasion requires that we converse together — Nay, his conduct towards her is scarcely respectful; I have seen him act similarly to many other women, for whom he professed no particular regard." And thus, Anny, — observe me well — impotently, as well as impatiently, reasoning, because I thought only, by the heart — because, in fact, I did not think at all — thus, Anny, in spite of, I will say, virtuous wishes and intentions, at the bottom of my soul, I allowed to continue within me, the whisperings of a delusion which, at last, plunged me into irremediable ruin.

"Never had I dared to exchange with my idol even the few casual words rendered as matter of course by our relative situations, without marking, at the same time, by my manner, the distance due from one

in a dependant station, towards a superior person. But whatever might have been my cousin Henry's feelings for Mary Bryan, it was quite evident to me that the young girl herself regarded him, not only with indifference, but aversion. She was not ignorant of his wild habits—(perhaps they might deserve a worse name);—indeed, he made no great secret of them even to her ears; and she would weep at what I could perceive was her sense of his rudeness; and at other times I have seen her shrink and shudder, when she witnessed the violent altercations which frequently took place between him and his father: for, dear Anny, both unfortunately had very violent tempers; and I fear neither was good christian enough to curb the impulse of his passions; and very often when, after leading the disputants into another room, and there partially succeeding in reconciling them to each other, I have returned into her presence, I used

to find her in utter misery, writhing under the effects of present alarm, and of anticipation of future wretchedness, at the prospect of becoming the wife of one so totally different from her own dispositions, tastes, and sentiments. Anny, I will not disguise from you—for why should I do so—that it was not always by mere observation of her conduct and manner, that I came to these conclusions; she has distinctly avowed to me, on those occasions, her thoughts and her feelings. Oh! how heavenly dove-like was Mary! and when I would respectfully endeavour to give her a more cheerful view of things, and to hold up to her what I believed to be a bright side of my cousin's character; when I painted it as distinguished for generosity, and noble feeling, notwithstanding all its lapses, into thoughtless folly; when I represented him to her in the light I was sure he deserved to be shewn in by me; then, Anny, she more than

once timidly approached me, and, placing her hand on mine, said, in a tone of voice and with a look absolutely entrancing, "How can you advocate the cause of a man so unlike yourself?" Anny, my child, from time to time, such indications of a return of love for the love I bore to her heightened the battle between my sense of duty and the impulse of my weak heart, to something beyond my powers of description.

On the very last occasion upon which my cousin and his father contended together —that dreadful day, when the son in his heated passion, although tempted by his parent's hand, outraged that parent beyond extenuation; when he was obliged to fly from the house to avoid the shedding of his blood, by his father, and, indeed, it was myself who by weak struggles with Mr. Stokesbury, succeeded in securing him the time necessary for his escape; upon that day when I returned to the drawing-room,

I found Mary Bryan lying insensible on the carpet. She had been a witness of the terrible scene I have alluded to; had fainted during its enactment; had been overlooked by us all, and now lay before me, not yet recovered from her swoon. Without the necessary reflection on what I was about to do, I impulsively caught her up in my arms; and while my heart throbbed, and my limbs trembled with fearful apprehensions, I used every means at hand to restore her to her senses.

"She opened her beautiful eyes; she glanced round in affright; her look then met mine, and instantly changed into an expression of such bursting confidence, of such melting appeal, that, together with the former fluttering state of my feelings, it deprived me of all presence of mind, all self-controul.

"'My adored!' I cried, dashing myself at her feet, as she reclined on a sofa—'my

life's queen! my love! my love!' I lay prostrate and covered my face with my hands, while the sobs choaked me. I heard her start, and feebly raise herself, as she whispered—'Connor Kennedy, what have you said to me?—stand up and let me hear you, distinctly.'

"I could not now interpret to my own full satisfaction the tones of her voice; and her words might mean either displeasure, or the contrary; and I therefore answered—

"'Forget my words, Miss Bryan! my presumptuous, my criminal words! put them out of your mind, as if you had never heard them!'

"But Mary spoke again, and not as if she would forget; and I replied; and—but why lengthen out the story of my fate?—oh! Anny, in that moment of deep affliction—in that moment of utter terror of the character and temper of my cousin, and of horror at the prospect of being united to him, Mary

Bryan told me that she loved me! that she had loved me as long and as well as I had loved her; that no force on earth should ever compel her to become the wife of Harry Stokesbury; that, to avoid him, she would resign wealth, station, independence—every thing but honour; that she would willingly abandon the fortune he was to receive with her hand; that she had rather—a thousand times rather—live with me in poverty, than with him, or with any man like him, on the world's throne; nay, that she would cheerfully work for her daily bread, for me and for herself, sooner than encounter the detested lot of a life at his side.

"Anny, my child, here was a trial for me!—the heart-tearing contest in my bosom I remember well to this very hour;—here was a happiness I had never even dreamt of offered to my hand! here was a bliss, beyond all imagination, placed within my reach; how did I act? to my Maker, who

hears me, I declare that I did not, as might be supposed, say to Mary that I accepted her love. Nay, I tried all in my power to make her believe that the unwilling words which had so lately escaped my lips were words of folly and of madness, and contained no applicable meaning. I could not, indeed, force myself to assert that I loved her not; conscience itself was not able to make me belie my affections; but, with miserable tears, I sought to point out to her how treacherous would be my conduct, did I dare to avow my passion; I insisted upon the gratitude which I owed to my cousin; I described how base would be my return for all his bounties, were I to rob him of the treasure he had so long regarded as his own; and, when she insisted that Harry Stokesbury loved only her wealth, I endeavoured —feebly perhaps, because my conviction, I should rather call it my perverted impression, went the contrary way—but I did endea-

vour to convince her that Henry Stokesbury really loved her for herself, and that she would be happy as his wife. And in fact, Anny, I left her presence, on that occasion, without renewing any declaration of the feelings that preyed on me—that lacerated the heart to which I pressed them for concealment, even as the cloaked animal fed upon the vitals of the Lacedemonian boy.

"Nor did I, upon the morrow, seek occasion to ensure her love; nor upon the next day, nor upon the next; and for some time, Mary and I met as strangers,—alas! more strangely and embarrassedly than strangers could meet. But, at last, I perceived that the beautiful idol of my adoration began to droop; that her cheek was fading; her eye narrowing, and losing its lustre; and that her whole air and manner were weighed down. And then, Anny, how often, oh! how often, did I detect myself in the impulse, almost in the act, of casting

myself before her, and proclaiming, with ecstasy, the love which I nurtured for her! But still, and still, I could hold myself back by the withering recollection that, by so doing, I should stamp and seal to all eternity my own character, as an ingrate and a traitor. Oh! that this stern sense of duty had never quitted me! Oh! that it had ever, ever stood erect at my side, like a mail-clad and frowning sentinel, watching over my moments of human weakness! Above all things, O that my insidious thought of my cousin's indifference to Mary had never taken possession, — tempting, fiendish possession, of my breast,—my harassed and my frail heart! My child, let my fate, I say it again, be your warning.

"Anny, I fell at last. She heard from me renewed expressions of my love for her; and, with my arms around her, we knelt and vowed, in the face of heaven, a mutual vow. And then, for a short time every

thing was forgotten by me. In the intoxicating consciousness of interchanged affection, between Mary Bryan and me, all possible consequences, all possible remorse, vanished from my view. But even the roaring drunkard, in the midst of his orgies, will sometimes feel, shot through him, an icy and sickening conviction of the crime, as well as the hollowness, of his self-forgetting and unnatural joys; and I, Anny, I, before we entwined each other's arms that day, I was a most miserable human being; and I started away from my paradise of enjoyment, to seek the deepest solitude, like the ambitious, fallen angel, hurled at once from heaven into hell. I well remember the place, out of doors, into which, after running fast from the house, I plunged myself. It was a thick, though small, clump of trees, surrounded by a paling in the paddock; no space for reclining, or even for motion, had been prepared within it; yet into it I tum-

bled, I may say; and there, scratched and stung by the thorns and the nettles, its sole obscure brushwood, I lay, so far as regarded my bodily sufferings, as if I had reclined upon a couch of regal down. But oh! the bed for the mind and the heart! there was none—there was none. My very ears throbbed; and throbbed to the echo of the infelt accusation of traitor! traitor! the black sin against the charge of which universal human nature is said to rise up in arms!—that sin,—the sin of ingratitude, the certain presence of it, rose up and wound within me like the coils of a hideous serpent! I had betrayed my benefactor; the benefactor of my earliest years!—the man, the relation, and the friend who had saved me from absolute squalidness!—who had put shoes on my bare feet in childhood! who had given me education, or, at least, some of the opportunies for acquiring it!—who, at least, had taken my mind out of that quagmire state of inferi-

ority in which it might have been self-neglected, or else trampled down!—who, along with all that had afforded me abundant means of superfluously luxurious enjoyment;—and who, far above all, all that, had ———Oh! I was very sure of it!—conferred upon me his heart's affection. ——Oh! Anny, my child, my child! I could do nothing but hide my face, even, I may say, from myself, and cry,—cry, Anny.

"Oh Anny! there is no real misfortune, but the conscience that accuses of crime! — A man may be plunged to the chin in apparent wretchedness!—poverty, sickness, long and racking pains may assail him; torturing pains, which seem to wrench his bones out of their joints, and to tear each little fibre of his nervously-constructed body into tatters; and, worse than this, even worldly neglect,—even the avoiding of you by one of your species, who imagines he has a cause of anger, or of superiority over

you;—all this, Anny, is nothing, nothing compared with one pang of an unquiet conscience!

"I still lay prone in my solitude, when I heard voices around me calling out my name. I appeared to one of those who sought me; he introduced me to another man, a messenger from my cousin, Harry Stokesbury. I stood before that obscure person weighed down with a sense of shame and degradation. With almost a felon's trepidation, and, I suppose, with almost a felon's look, I received at his hands a letter from his employer.

"Henry had now been absent from his home more than three months. During that time, his own man, the individual who at present confronted me, had been a confidential agent between us. We had, therefore, kept up a constant correspondence. His demands for money were incessant, yet I found means to supply them. His father had be

stowed considerable sums on me, for the purpose of proving, as he gave me to understand, that his refusal of the constant demands of his son did not arise from a parsimonious disposition, but rather because he would not encourage Harry's spendthrift habits. Anny, every shilling thus received by me was transmitted through his favourite servant to my cousin. When such sources failed, I borrowed for him, wherever I could obtain credit; and I even requested and took loans from the gentle Mary, who never refused my applications, because I imagined I was only anticipating a resource which would ultimately become my cousin's undisputed right.

"The note which the confidential messenger now put into my hands contained only a few words, merely intimating that Harry was upon the point of setting off for a very distant residence; that urgent necessity

compelled his immediate departure; and that the bearer would verbally convey to me a request which he required me to fulfil, if I cared for him or loved him.

"I demanded of the man the nature of the service I was to perform; and learned, in the first place, that a sum of money, of which the amount surprised me, was necessary; but, Anny, how shall I express to you the effect produced on me by the communication of the second portion of the courier's intelligence! In the strictest confidence, on the part of Harry Stokesbury, I was informed that my cousin had been recently married; and the name of his bride was supplied to me. For some time before, I had been aware that Harry had occasionally visited the young person in question; and, to my mind, there was, therefore, probability in the servant's statement. Probability to *my mind*, I say, Anny; but, mark me still, —to my weak and credulous heart

there was, what there ought not to have been,—certainty!—Yes, my child; and even when my reason proposed a close and cautious investigation of the subject, that deceitful heart, panting with selfish exultation, turned me aside from my purpose. Oh Anny! I wanted to be deceived! that was the real truth. I wanted to believe myself made free, by Harry Stokesbury's own renunciation of her, to espouse Mary Bryan, and the most loose evidence of such an act, therefore, satisfied me. And when thus relieved from the tortures of conscience, which, but a few moments before, had been fastened upon me like gnawing reptiles, can you not imagine, Anny, the wild turbulence of joy which I, at length, experienced!

"The sum of money required of me, very considerable as it was, I soon made up; with it in his possession, the man went away; and next day I became, in secret, Mary Bryan's husband.

"For more than nine months afterwards I did not hear of or from my cousin. He had not intimated to me the place of his intended new residence, and I could not, therefore, expect that a letter from me would directly reach him; and although I did frequently write to the not remote retreat he had chosen, when first expelled from home by his father's violence, no answer ever came to my hand. But we met again, and that meeting was terrific.

"Two months after my marriage with his ward, old Mr. Stokesbury died; and, died, too, ignorant of that circumstance, although his last will proved that he had wished it. In vain did I assail, with entreaties and prayers, his death-bed, in order to prevail upon him to forgive his erring son, and call him home to receive a last blessing.

"Mary and I lived on together, under the roof which had now become Harry Stokesbury's, the two happiest of God's

creatures. I longed for the presence of my generous cousin to witness, and I was sure, to enjoy, our bliss; but he came not; and still I had no tidings of him, directly, or indirectly. My wife made me the father of a glorious boy. Unable, herself to nurture her baby, it was given in charge to a young married woman, residing in the neighbourhood. She was yet confined to her bed, slowly regaining her strength; the infant's nurse suddenly burst, in distraction, into her chamber, and told the mother that her first-born child had been torn away from her arms; and that, with curses and with threats of destruction towards it on his lips, Henry Stokesbury was the ravisher.

"This fearful and abrupt announcement threw my poor Mary into a dangerous fever. My fears and agonies for her were intense. And so, too, were my misgivings, on another account. Then first did I begin to doubt my former belief that Harry was

indifferent to Mary Bryan; then did I tremble at the thought that the last message I had received from him might have been a fabrication!

"I was not long left in uncertainty. The terrified young nurse had made her appearance towards night-fall. That same night I heard the house tumultuously broken into. My wife had fallen into a fitful slumber. I was sitting at her bed-side. The door was kicked open; Harry Stokesbury, with all the rage of a maniac in his look and manner, dashed into the room. Suddenly feeling certain of the supposed grounds for his coming violence, in vain did I start up to offer him an explanation; in vain did I implore him to listen to me, but for an instant. He beat me down with his powerful hand; with his foot he crushed me and trampled upon me, till I lay almost insensible. Loud and long shrieks from my wife partly recalled my fluttering mind.

Ghastly and bleeding as I was, I staggered up and cast myself upon the bed. In an instant she was dead in my arms.

"Consciousness now quite forsook me; and indeed, as I have been informed, did not, during a long, long period, revisit me. In fact, my child, and do not let me startle you by the avowal—for many blank and dreary years, I was a melancholy madman."

But poor Anny did start and shudder, too. Her guardian continued:

"When, after the long night of forgetfulness, reason's blessed rays again dawned upon me, I learned that Harry Stokesbury had been prosecuted and convicted for the commission of the acts I have described to you. Oh, Anny! had I been, at that time, a conscious creature, never should he have been questioned on the matter!—sooner would I have seen my adored wife die again—sooner, sooner should my own heart's blood have flowed, than that Harry

Stokesbury should have stood before the world as a culprit! I would have acknowledged the justice of his vengeance. I would have cast my wretched life, a thousand times, were it possible, between him and public disgrace!

"Yes, Anny; and I would have given up to him his right—his inheritance; I would have resigned to him even my Mary's dower—oh, I would have endeavoured in any way to prove to him that I was not the very, very ungrateful wretch he supposed me to be; and then I would have hidden my ill-starred head from the world, and lived—if that were practicable, upon my recollections. Oh, Anny, Anny, I learned that my loving, and my beloved, cousin had been convicted as a felon, on my account, and banished from his country—and then, that he had found a grave under the roaring sea; and I regarded myself, from first to last, as his destroyer!

"It was only very lately that I discovered the fatal error, to which I must immediately attribute my misery. You know Kynan Donnelly, Anny. A short time ago I employed him as a helper about this house — he had been the bearer of my cousin's last note to me. He it was who had feigned that damning message, from Harry Stokesbury, which informed me that he was married. Some months since, Kynan appeared before me very penitent; acknowledged his former crime, and seemed to me so truly contrite, as the unintentional author of my misfortunes, that I took him into my service —particularly as I understood that he was in great distress; and most particularly because, notwithstanding any former wrong against myself, I knew him to have been in early days the favoured servant of the ill-fated Harry Stokesbury..

Donnelly's motive for his conduct, upon the miserable occasion of all our sorrows,

seemed to me to be high-minded, and I could not blame him. He really did suppose that his master was the husband of the young person whom he had mentioned to me; he had not been unaware of the state of Mary Bryan's feelings; and, under the impression that he was doing a service to both parties, he gave to me, as direct information from his master, what was but the result of his own invention. I forgave him, too, on another account. I recollected that I should not have received his fatal message without rigorous examination, and I said to myself, that since I *had* taken it on trust from my treacherous heart, I was much more guilty than the bearer of it. Well — no matter — I have forgiven poor Donnelly—resentment, now, is not in the slightest degree a quality of my nature. Indeed, it is quite dead within me; and for nothing that has happened to me, do I reproach any body but myself

"Anny—you have heard the history of

my life. You now understand why, since you have known me, from childhood up to womanhood, I have hidden my head from the world. That world bestows upon me many hard names; well; perhaps it punishes me only as I deserve. At all events, I have bidden adieu to it without a murmur, and still in charity with it; because, though not as guilty as it would make me, still I know that I am very guilty.

"And you will now also understand, my dear Anny, why you have never seen the cloud of sorrow pass from my brow. You will now understand why I have so seldom smiled upon the sports of your childhood, the witcheries of your girlhood, and I may say the graces of your womanhood."

"Dear, dear friend," said Anny weeping, and again kissing his hand, "I do not recollect that I have ever, ever yet, wanted the encouragement, or the cheerfulness, or the sympathy of your beloved and respected smile."

"Well, Anny—I have only to thank you, over and over again for that generous assertion. But, I must continue to say, that you will now understand why I have scarce ever, ever, seemed cheerful in my own house; why, even my own servants look upon me with coldness, with affright perhaps; certainly with want of interest, and sometimes with rudeness; why I am not able to assert myself sternly and openly as a man ought to do, even upon the slightest occasion of annoyance. In fact, you will understand why I am the nervous, the shivering, the almost unmanly creature you know me to be;—why a loud word makes me start;—why the appearance of violence makes me recoil;—and, I wish particularly to say, why this day, this very day, I avoided the presence of our friend, Mr. George Blundell, when I saw, or when I thought I saw, his passion boiling for vent, against any opposing obstacle.

"Anny, it is not courageous to admit what I am about to add—but I have never boldly raised up my head since I was left trampled down, and disfigured in my own blood, at the bed-side of my departed Mary. Before that, I had had strong moral courage and, without boasting, I could prove the assertion; although I never was a strongly built man: and certainly never a brawling one; and it may be, that all I have suffered has weakened the nerves of my body—so as to give me the semblance of almost a trembling girl—when I see the least threat of approaching turbulence.

"Anny, you have early given away the affections of your young and generous heart. Mine is a history of the heart. Oh! profit by my example, dear child. Under your present circumstances, let not the mere impulse of your bosom determine you in the way you have to go. Do not

act because you want to act. Listen to the whisperings of affection, to their blandishments and their sophistry, with suspicion, nay, with alarm. In a word, keep my fate before your mind, and then I shall not have told my sad tale in vain."

We have followed Mr. Kennedy's narrative without interruption, because it seemed unnecessary to break it up by mentioning the agitated and frequent pauses he made in his discourse; or by describing the effects it produced, from time to time, upon his fair auditor. And now it is sufficient to say that, at its close, the gentle Anny felt most strongly for the sufferings of her guardian, exerting all her powers to bind up and revivify his bruised spirit; and that, before they separated for the night, Mr. Kennedy, while impressing upon her cheek a parting kiss, acknowledged, in an affectionate whisper, how much more endurable he now

felt, in consequence of her sympathy, the pressure of his griefs.

The same night, at a late hour, Anny and her attendant, were seated in the sleep-chamber of the former. They had been engaged in very earnest conversation, and had not therefore noticed how the time flew. The other members of the household had long before retired to rest, and all was dully silent around them;

> The slumbering pulse of night stood still;

and, but for the low whisperings of Grace Carroll's voice, the fairy flutter of the moth's wing, as it whirled round the candle, might almost have been heard.

It was the nature of her theme, as well perhaps as the solemn midnight hour, and the awfully congenial silence, which subdued to a murmuring cadence, Grace's usually vigorous tones. She had been descanting at great length on the supernatural endowments of the strange Man of the

Inch. She had been telling of his foul nightly revels, amid blazing lights, shouts of laughter, and sometimes, very strange to say, shrieks of seeming agony, with the devil and his imps: and of the spells which he cast on ill-starred females; and Grace stated, as a well-received opinion, nay, as an uncontroulable truth, that an impress stamped by the enemy of man, disfigured that side of his face which he so carefully kept concealed; and she was most eloquent on the nature of the unholy fire which burned in his uncovered eye.

Had Anny been uninfluenced by a pre-occupation of mind on the present subject, she might have smiled at all this improbable exaggeration; but she could not forget her own disagreeable encounter with the strange Man, nor the painful warnings of the Mayor of Wind-gap; besides this individual, so universally dreaded and detested, was the father of George Blun-

dell. She listened therefore, attentively, and all but assentingly, to every thing Grace Carroll was saying, or could say; bending down towards the girl, who sat on a foot-stool, some distance from her, in the attitude of one who is distressingly interested.

Suddenly she laid her hand upon the shoulder of her humble companion, and,—"Stop Grace," she said, "do you not hear a foot on the stairs?"

Unable to utter a word, Grace gazed at her in gaping terror.

"There certainly is some one creeping up the stairs," continued Anny, turning deadly pale, "and my door remains unbolted, I believe."

With the speed of great fear, agitated and trembling as she was, Anny tripped towards the door; but she had not reached it, when the handle of its lock turned; it swung wide open; and, before she could effectually cry out for assistance, she was

seized, and her voice stifled. Four men, carefully, though ridiculously, disguised, had entered the room, at once; and Grace Carroll, simultaneously with the measures adopted towards her mistress, was bound hand and foot, and also well gagged.

"One word louder than your breath," said a growling voice in the girl's ear, "and I'll slit your wind-pipe, as nate as ever the little cook in the kitchen done it for the turkey."

They rummaged the apartment for articles of outside dress; and as many as they could find were hastily forced upon Anny's person, by the rough hands of her not gentle attendants. This done, she was borne away with well arranged silence and celerity. Through the open hall-door of the house, they conveyed her into the street; then rapidly to the nearest suburb; there they placed her on one of those small "cars," used by the peasantry of Ireland;

and, two of her captors holding her securely in it, drove it with the utmost speed of which such a machine is capable.

THE END OF VOL. I.

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THE

MAYOR OF WIND-GAP.

THE

MAYOR OF WIND-GAP

AND

CANVASSING.

BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE

MAYOR OF WIND-GAP.

CHAPTER I.

THE dreadful voice in her ear, threatening her with destruction if she did not remain quiet, nearly deprived Grace Carroll of her senses. Implicit obedience to its command she was, however, able to determine upon; and she, therefore, continued for a considerable lapse of time, lying upon the floor, where, with her mouth tightly muffled, her elbows pinioned, and her ankles and knees well tied up, she had been flung by her rude assaulters. As still as if she were in her coffin, indeed, Grace lay; and, mentally

overwhelmed beneath the hugeness of her terror, her mistress was absolutely carried out of the chamber without the poor girl's knowledge of the fact. Selfishness altogether monopolized her feelings.

At length, however, her consternation began slightly to decrease. She became sensible that a dead silence reigned around her; and then arose a recollection of Anny; and the thought, having once gained admission into her mind, was too engrossing to be dismissed. She ventured to move her head from one side to another, and thus enabled herself to take a piecemeal survey of the room; a candle, prematurely wasted away to the socket by an enormous thief, flickered on the chimney, affording, however, sufficient light for Grace's purposes. Her mistress was no where to be seen.—Her mistress was gone!—was forced away from her!—And all Grace Carroll's merely selfish terrors vanished.—After many efforts, and after repeatedly rolling about the floor, like

a fettered calf, she succeeded in gaining a sitting posture; then she ingeniously unposed the bandage from her mouth; and, finally, her cries and yells resounded through the house.

In a few minutes, all the inmates of the establishment, with one exception, were before her. They unbound Grace; but, for some time, she could assert nothing but that her young mistress was in the hands of that terror of maidens, and walking challenge to all true knights, the strange Man of the Inch. How did she know that? She was sure of it. How was she sure of it? Because she was. — And no farther could Grace go.

The nervous, if not hypocondriacal, Mr. Kennedy was scarce able to do more than tremble and lament with the females of his household; and the task of eliciting from the half-crazed Grace Carroll something like an intelligible account of the misfortune she so clamorously proclaimed, devolved

upon Joseph Fitzgerald, his aged and demure butler.

In answer to the questions of this individual, she still positively asserted that the strange Man of the Inch, in his proper person, had entered the apartment, leading on twelve men, at least, all, as well as himself, with visages on their faces.

Joseph Fitzgerald interrupted her to ask how, if the strange Man had worn a vizor, could she be so very sure of his features?

"How? was it how that happened, they were for asking her? Sure, if a body would know him before that night, with the visage on that he always wore over more than a good half of his face, wasn't it the aisiest thing in life to know him, every bit as well, when he only dhrew it over the other half? More be token, what other livin' tory, on the face of the earth, *could* snap up her young misthress from her?"

Now, Joseph Fitzgerald had certain

misgivings that another person might prove, notwithsanding all this reasoning, to be Anny's abductor; and he felt great relief in consequence; for, if he were right, Anny's lot was not so hopeless a one as that insisted upon for her, by her distracted attendant.

He had understood that young George Blundell was a rejected lover. Upon the evening when Anny had refused to grant him an interview, he had seen him rush out of the house; and was shocked and alarmed at the black expression of the young man's countenance, believing it, at the time, to indicate an innate character, capable of any act of desperation. Upon his departure from Anny, after the last recorded conversation between them, honest Joseph had also encountered George; and though his brow did not wear a continued fierceness of threat, still, it was far from being as calm as, for general peace-sake, it ought to have been:—and he had not since been near the

house, nor sent a message, nor a letter,—and that looked bad. Besides, it was more natural and probable that he should be the offender in this present instance, than a man who, tainted as his public character might be, had not, to Joseph's knowledge, ever beheld his young lady. Under all the circumstances, the butler's suspicions fastened on George Blundell; and if he could make out and prove his case, no great calamity had occurred, after all. Miss Anny had only been run away with by a man she loved dearly, in her heart, whatever lovers' nonsense had set them quarrelling of late; and, no doubt, the boy would marry her, and then every thing would go right, again!

With this end in view, Joseph Fitzgerald cross-questioned Grace Carroll, hoping to shake her testimony, as to the undoubtable presence of the strange Man, on the late occasion. But, upon this point, Grace was invulnerable; nay, she now began to

add, to her former assertions, that it was the strange Man, himself, who had carried Anny down stairs, in his arms, all the time that she, the witness, saw him as plain in the back, "as ever she saw a pot of potatoes film on the fire." (It is evident that either Grace is, or that we are, the utterer, or the utterers of a bouncing imagination.)

Joseph changed his ground of attack. Had she any knowledge of the faces, or persons, of any other man of the party?

"Musha, no; the fright was too big, in her eyes, to let her mind any one but the strange man, and her poor young misthress."

"Was she positively sure that young Mr. Blundell had not been in the room?"

Grace, with a sudden catching of breath, dropped her jaw, rolled her eyes, and remained cogitatively silent: she had heard nothing of George Blundell's explanation with Anny, but she *had* seen him, upon more than one occasion, in company with the strange Man of the Inch. Juff Carroll in-

sisted, and Grace firmly believed, that he had assisted the strange man in forcing away her cousin Peggy; and, no doubt, as all the world said, they were associates in every crime. And having rapidly called all this to mind, how Grace did begin to wonder at herself, aloud, for not having before recollected all that she really and truly had seen! In fact, a new and convincing light broke upon her as she added, "Och, vourneens! I'm a fool of the world, for, now that the senses are coming back to me, I'm as good as book-sure that it *was* Mr. George Blundell, his own self, that whispered them wicked words about the turkey into my ear! Wouldn't I know his voice from a thousand, as good rights I have?"

But proofs for his purpose, better than those which Grace had given, awaited the sagacious Joseph. Bellowings of a human voice were, at this instant, heard distinctly, though remotely, in the lower, and more remote parts of the premises.

It has been mentioned that, when Grace loudly invoked the attention of the household, only one individual of it had failed to attend her summons. This was a man who slept on the kitchen suite of the establishment. He was the same who has been mentioned by Mr. Kennedy in his narrative to Anny; the bearer, in fact, some twenty years before the time of the present scene of our tale, of the unauthenticated message from his then master, young Henry Stokesbury, to Connor Kennedy, which directly caused all the dreadful events that followed the marriage of Harry's protegè with Mary Bryan. We need not remind the reader that, from motives of christian charity, upon the acknowledgment of his error; from pity for his destitute situation, as well as from a wish to be a friend to any one, even the humblest person who had been connected with his cousin, Mr. Kennedy, at least, according to his own statement, bad, some short time ago, taken Patrick

Donnelly into his employment, and Joseph Fitzgerald decided that it was the voice of Patrick Donnelly, which now attracted general attention; and he was right. He descended with others, and found Patrick bound to his bedstead; a piece of wood and a strip of his bed-clothes lying near to him, which, he said, he had just been enabled to force out of his mouth. He was set at liberty, and interrogated, and his answers greatly raised the hopes of Joseph Fitzgerald. Patrick Donnelly had retired to rest early. He had been awakened from his sleep by a consciousness of personal violence. Before he could defend himself he had been so effectually manacled and gagged, like poor Grace, above stairs, that he became incapable of giving any resistance, or even of alarming the house. But, during his short and vain struggle with his captors, a black vizor had fallen from one of their faces, and, by the light of a lantern, held by another, he distinctly recog-

nized George Blundell; as to the strange Man of the Inch, he could only speak by surmise; the lantern had not happened to have flashed upon the features of any other person of the party, except those of George Blundell; but he had heard of the strange Man of the Inch, as every body had; and, according to the different descriptions conveyed to him, from one source or another, it might be, that one individual, answering in height, in manner, and in general expression, to that formidable fright, seemed to have had command over the rest. But still, Patrick would not swear to this as distinctly as he could to the identical presence of George Blundell.

Joseph Fitzgerald very naturally made light of the presumptive case against the strange man, even upon the joint shewing of Grace and Patrick, and became assured on the contrary, from their corroborative evidence, that George Blundell was still the object of his legal pursuit.

The two trusty servants, Joseph and Patrick, proceeded to ascertain, as a preliminary step to justice, in what manner entrance had been effected. In the rear of Mr. Kennedy's house was an extensive yard, surrounded by high walls. A door opened into it from a lane, passing by one of those walls. It appeared evident that that wall had been scaled; that some one had descended into the yard, and forced back the lock of the door, and removed its heavy wooden cross bolt. The lock of the door, leading from the yard to the kitchen of the house, had been cut away by a hand saw, as the observers were enabled immediately to decide, and from the outside, too. It was also evident that the burglars must have known that Donnelly slept in the first quarter of the residence, entered by them; and that, therefore, he had first been overpowered, secured, and silenced, in order to save them interruption in their progress to the upper regions of the house. We have

been minute in the detail of these circumstances for the purpose of making the reader understand, in every way, how suspicion fastened upon George Blundell.

It is necessary, also, to take into consideration that, reckoning from the moment of Grace Carroll's selfish lethargy, and allowing for the time consumed in prevailing upon her to account for her cries, and her position, as also for that wasted in the investigation we have just recorded, more than four hours had now elapsed, since Miss Kennedy's abduction, before any vigorous steps were even resolved upon, for bringing her home again.

Now, however, the first proceeding decided upon by Joseph Fitzgerald was that of seeking out, and securing, Mr. George Blundell. For this, a legal warrant to arrest his person, as soon as possible, became necessary. It was indispensible for Mr. Kennedy to give his name and his countenance to the measure; and, though

with much nervousness and trepidation, he yielded to Joseph's hint.

The house in which George Blundell lodged was, as may be recollected, almost exactly opposite to Mr. Kennedy's; and at the moment that Mr. Kennedy and his party had passed their own threshold, a tall figure, muffled in a loose outside coat, was in the act of opening, with a latch-key, the confronting door. All paused, to observe this person's motions. His key having performed its convenient office, he cautiously half pushed back the door, and having stolon into the passage, secured it after him.

It was determined that, until the ends of justice should be attained, this person ought to be watched.—Patrick Donnelly volunteered to stand as sentinel on the house, promising that, if he should attempt to re-issue into the street, he would secure him at any risk. This suggestion was adopted; and, leaving Patrick upon his post,

Joseph Fitzgerald, accompanied, we may say, by Mr. Kennedy, and other subalterns, proceeded to take legal measures for arresting George Blundell.

They bent their steps to the residence of the Mayor of the city. They knocked loud and long at his shop-door, the only one which gave entrance to his house; their summons was not speedily answered, as his worship and his only maid-servant were sound sleepers. When he did appear behind the bench of justice,—his counter—it first became indispensible he should try, by rubbing and scooping into his eye-sockets, with his fat knuckles, to divert his still somniferous inclinations. Before this process, words had been addressed to his ears, but he really heard them not.

When partially awakened, the Mayor listened very patiently, and, if one might judge by the staring of his large, globular, grey eyes, very attentively, also, to Joseph Fitzgerald's statement. But whether it

arose from some incontinuous circuitude in the structure of his ear, or from some knot or twist of the optic nerve,—(the cellular membrane is left quite out of the question) —his worship failed to catch the subject submitted to him. He appeared, indeed, sadly puzzled how to act. Seeming to ponder and analyze, he took off his red night-cap, and with it rubbed his bald pate, as if, by a scientific process, he would elicit, with its friction against the polished globe, some sparks of "wisdom and discretion." But the machine would not work. He then turned an imploring look on Mr. Kennedy; but that gentleman's silent tears still more chilled his powers of mechanical comprehension, as atmospheric-damp neutralizes the real electric apparatus. His glance next slowly sought the face of Joseph Fitzgerald; inquietude, impatience, and even repulsion, were expressed thereon. In fact, finding no conductor to the surface of his cranium, he heaved a long, long sigh, and

exclaimed—"Oh! my gracious!—I wish that Roger was here!"

Roger was accordingly sent for; and in a reasonable time made his appearance. The arrangement of his attire bespoke a hasty toilette. The long queue of his wig dangled over one shoulder;—the back peak of his cocked-hat was before; he held his great sword in one hand, and his huge cudgel in the other; the knees of his small-clothes were unbuttoned; and his unstockinged splay-feet, supporting his lean, hairy, spindle shanks, had been hastily thrust into untied brogues.

His worship passed to Roger his own general recollections of what had been stated to him; but, in fact, he did no more than if he had handed to his officer, from off the shelf at his back, for the purpose of setting it right, one of his own tangled skeins of half-penny blay thread. Joseph Fitzgerald was obliged to repeat, for the ears of the pompous Roger Divey, a story

which he had previously made plain enough.

The result was that, with great alacrity on the part of Roger, a warrant for the apprehension of George Blundell became quickly and duly perfected; and, courageously buckling on his rapier, Roger, aided by two inferior officers, and followed by Joseph Fitzgerald, proceeded to execute it.

Donnelly was found faithfully on his post.—Roger had now no necessity to inflict upon the lion-faced knocker, the outrage that, upon a former occasion, he had thought himself bound to do. The servant girl was in the act of undoing the shutters of the lower windows; she had previously left open the hall-door. Without a word, Roger, attended by his followers, gained an entrance. Somehow or other, he had before now become acquainted with the statistics of the premises; and he and his little band proceeded, therefore, up stairs, and without

ceremony burst into George Blundell's sleeping chamber.

At the noise they made, the young man started up, sat upon the side of his bed, and gazed upon his intruders. He was almost dressed; evidently he had been asleep in his clothes, of which some portions were soiled with mire. Roger Divey quickly pointed out these ominous appearances; as also a loose outside coat, a slouched hat, and a mask, which lay tossed on a chair.

It would seem that George Blundell's first impulse had been to rush forward and question the rude disturbers of his slumbers; but it was now apparent that as soon as he recognised the officers of justice, he recoiled and sat still, as if checked by some embarrassing fear.—"Oh! my God!" they heard him ejaculate, although in a low tone—"what can this mean, so soon?"

"Misther Blundell, I beg it of you, in

honour of the Lord," began Joseph Fitzgerald, anxiously pressing forward.

"I say, you man, you, d'ye see me," interrupted Roger Divey, authoritatively pushing him back; — "keep yourself to yourself; and let there be none to the fore but party and party—as ye shall all answer the conthrary, at your peril—;" and Roger domineeringly cleared the room of every one but himself and its proprietor, and secured the door as carefully as he could.

"Isn't this a purty kittle o' fish, my young masther?" he resumed, facing round to George Blundell, assuming his fullest air of dignity — "soh! — the game was not fine enough for you, at Guff Carroll's, d'ye see me?"

"What is your charge, now, my good fellow?" questioned George Blundell.

"What's the charge, now?—By vartue o' the good oath I have taken, 'tisn't undher every stone you may kick up, that

you'll find the body able to bring you clane out of it. Bud there is one honest man to make the venthre for you, howsomever; an', someway or somehow, we—we know where we stand, when we are on our legs, God bless 'em."

"I have little doubt of your talents, in any case," said George, "but I only wish to hear you state, at once, your present accusation against me."

Roger sunk his official voice into an approach to social condescension, and, taking a chair, half-smiled, and bent himself forward, as he continued:

"The week that's gone by, d'ye see me, a raal tory, d'ye see me, thro' an' thro', came afore his worship an' myself — long may his worship reign!—an' the name he had on him was *Shawn-a-faustha*;—an' he was brought to us by a man o' the Dunns; and that man wanted to make it as clear as a whistle that Shawn had a way of ating mutton that never hard the

noise o' the butcher knife, rubbing to his steel; an' he thried to down-face the mayor an' myself, d'ye see me, that the sheep he found, 'wid the skhin on id, undher my poor Shawn's roof, was a sheep of his own, by rason that it had his mark tarred on id. Bud, Shawn spoke wid one Roger Divey; an' sure it turned out, in the long run, that poor *Shawn-a-faustha*, was a born-nathril * widout the wit to stale a *thraneen* out of a field, not to talk of a clever, active sheep, that 'ud be runnin' about the field, on his fawr legs;—an', anyhow, no one that hard Shawn spakin' could think he ever had an ounce o' sinse in his head; an' so, d'ye see me, Masther Blundell, we proved that the sheep, into the bargain, was a poor fool of a sheep, just like Shawn; and that she wouldn't stay in Dunn's fields, but made her way out of it, not knowin' where she was goin', or what she was doin'; an' ran into

* Simpleton.

Shawn's cabin, an' happened to fall upon the bill-hook, an' kilt herself."

During this wily appeal for a heavy retaining fee, George Blundell's thoughts had lapsed into a train of agonized reflection, so that not an echo of Roger's voice intelligibly reached his ear. It was only when the man stopped speaking that he awoke to a sense of the necessity of again addressing him.

"But you have not yet told me the nature of the charge brought against me."

"By vartue o' the oath, d'ye see me, it was asy enough to put off poor Juff Carroll at a nonplush; but, it would give work to a raal counshellor to make the right appear against Connor Kennedy; he is a knowin' ould pet-fox."

"Connor Kennedy? what of him?" demanded George Blundell.

"Why barrin' there's one to make the right appear against him, it wouldn't be pleasant to kiss the book on the wrong side;

and to prove that there was no burglary at his dour an' no takin', forcin', an' carryin' away, *why at arums*, a body that goes by the name of his daughther, Misthress Anna Kennedy, spinsther, d'ye see me?"

George Blundell started up, and—

"Heaven and earth, have I understood you?" he said: "do you assert that Miss Kennedy has been forced from her father's house?"

Roger laughed quietly, incredulously, and peace-makingly, as upon former occasions he had been in the habit of doing, at the first vain attempt to disavow guilt, on the part of undoubted offenders, against the law.

"I say, my young Masther, d'ye see me, is it an *omadhaun* * is in my coat?"

"Answer my question!" resumed George Blundell, in a loud overbearing voice.

"Whoo!—pallaloo! sure he wants to frighten us now, entirely, like others I have

* Fool.

known before him in the same purty condition!" said Roger sneeringly; "and so, my young genteel, you purtend not to know that Miss Anny Kennedy was forced, and taken and carried away, long afore day-break this morning? and may be you won't look at that?" drawing a paper out of his bosom, "and may be you wouldn't see, into the bargin, that it's a warrant, made out by his worship and myself, to make a caption o' you, your own self—for the same?"

George Blundell snatched up the paper; read it frowningly; groaned aloud; flung himself into his bed, and muttered "All is right—proceed in your business."

"Maning to say that you're ready to go before his worship?" demanded Roger.

"Yes, meaning to say exactly that."

"And who's to plade for you, my young squire? where is the fee to bring you out o' your throuble?"

"Do your duty, and curse you! I have no money to give you:" answered George.

Roger immediately summoned his assistants; they were quickly by his side. At first, the captured man did not seem to heed any thing around him. After a pause, however, he was heard to say, in a low voice, "Father, father!" and then suddenly changed into high passion—"but no—after all your promises, you are not a father to me! Oh Anny, Anny! all this is too horrible! When, or how can I rejoin you, now? Oh! —thus—thus it is easy!"—he sprang towards the door, seemingly unconscious of any one's presence: but he found himself interrupted.

"Give way there, at your peril!" he cried aloud.

Roger technically touched him on the shoulder, and arrested him as the king's prisoner — and Roger's myrmidons closed round him; and when he offered violence, overpowered and secured him. In fact, George Blundell behaved too furiously; the swords of the town bailiffs were drawn;

and bleeding from many, though slight, wounds, he was eventually led away captive.

The rumour of Anny Kennedy's abduction soon spread wide and far; a magistrate of some intelligence — a man, indeed, of *some* "wisdom and discretion," came to the aid of the Mayor of the town, and George Blundell was brought before their worships.

The proofs of at least participation in the legal offence became satisfactorily established against him. To say nothing of Grace Carroll, Patrick Donnelly swore that George Blundell was one of those who had bound and gagged him; and the circumstances of his stealthy entry into his lodgings about day-break; the finding the loose outside coat, the slouched hat, and the mask upon the chair in his bed-room; and last, though not least, his having gone to bed without fully undressing, together with the soils upon the clothes he had slept in, formed strong corroborative testimony—

neither did any one forget that in just such a coat, hat, and mask, each of the abductors had entered the premises of Connor Kennedy.

George Blundell vainly tried to shatter or shake the chain of evidence wound around him. Indeed, he met legal proofs with nothing but angry or impassioned assertions. He proclaimed his innocence; he clamoured to be set free, vehemently and absurdly pledging life and honour and swearing to the pledge by the most awful name that Anny Kennedy should quickly be restored to her guardian, were she to be found on the face of the earth. The directing magistrate naturally regarded all this but as a boyish *ruse* to escape the consequences which hung over the prisoner's head, scornfully expressing his wonder at the silliness, which would expect, or even seem to expect, that such proposals should be complied with.

Mr. Connor Kennedy was present dur-

ing the investigation. He sat alone and apart, still shedding tears, rocking his person to and fro, and not uttering a word. George Blundell fixed his eye upon him; appealed to him for protection or confidence, and asked him to become legal security for his re-appearance, provided he were allowed to issue forth on his quixotic expedition for the recovery of Anny; but Mr. Kennedy would not raise up his eyes, and, in addition to his former gesticulation, only clasped his hands together. In fact, George Blundell was fully committed to prison.

CHAPTER II.

For a good distance, the way taken by Anny Kennedy, or rather by her self-elected guardians, was a long, rough, bye-road; then, much to her personal relief, though she cared little about it, after rolling over soft turf, the car stopped. A solitary mud cabin, one of those inhabited by the very poorest of the peasantry, appeared before Anny; and she was lifted down from her chariot of little ease, and carried through its low door-way into the interior apartment; two miserable chambers forming the

whole of the space, which its tattered thatched roof covered.

Here was a single dipt-candle; the earthen floor was uneven and unswept; the mud-walls were damp and bare; rafters and wattles, blackened by smoke, canopied Anny's head; and the only furniture consisted of two ricketty, rush-bottomed chairs, and a bedstead to match.

Her conductors half-thrust her into the cheerless place, and then retired, securing, as well as it permitted, the door upon her. For a moment she stood in the middle of the floor, still pinioned and gagged. A woman, wrinkled, and of a bad countenance, entered, and, with a hand somewhat less rough than those which had last ministered about Anny's person, restored her to the use of her limbs and her tongue.

Could horror agreeably or fitly be expressed by a young and lovely face and form, Anny Kennedy might now be taken as a personification of it, as, first glaring

fearfully around, her eyes finally fastened on those of her new attendant.

"Are you of my own sex?" she asked, in a beseeching, hopeless tremour of look and manner.

"You 'ax me that," answered the woman, "because the wrinkles are on my face, and because its fatures are hard-grained and forbidin', but there was a time when my cheek was smooth and rosy, and my eye bright and good-humoured, and my lip red, and my foot light; and then I was blithe, and used to sing and laugh, as the others did, when we all went out a-maying; but I am changed now; changed before my time; wrinkled before my time; aye, and I know that something is come into my face, too, that was not in it at first; and although I have strength enough to run, I can't do it; the heart weighs me down; it is as heavy as lead; and it is rotten with sin."

"But still it is a woman's heart? It has

still something of a woman's nature left in it."

"Not a bit, I fear, not a bit; I am a devil on the face of the earth, hastening on to my grave, and afeard of the world to come."

"You have been sinful," continued Anny, touching, though against her will, the wretch's shoulder, "you have been sinful, and sin has brought you sorrow?"

"Worse than sorrow, it has brought me, young mistress; worse than sorrow, it has brought me; it has brought me the untimely wrinkles, and the despair."

"Then save a fellow-creature from sin, from sorrow, and from despair, such as you now know and feel;" pleaded Anny—"were you the most sinful being that ever outraged heaven, heaven is good! One act of christian charity, such as I implore at your hands, may bring upon your soul the grace of repentance, and then the grace of a forgiv-

ing God! Savo me! You are still a woman I say—Save me!"

"Spake lower," hoarsely whispered the premature crone, "and mind what you spake at all; there is a guard upon the dour."

"Tell me, good woman! Oh! tell me one thing at least! in whose power am I?"

"In the power of one that never yet used his power mercifully."

"The man who is called the strange Man of the Inch?"

"Yes, asthore; its in his hands you are."

"Oh God! oh God! Oh! if there is but a drop of compassion in you, let it melt and flow for me, then! Oh woman! good, good woman, whatever is in the power of human gratitude to do, I will do for you in return! you say you have been sinful, and that you are unhappy; I will take you to my very bosom; I will call you my friend, my deliverer, my earthly saviour;

I will—humbly depending on Him for help—I will teach you to hope in God! I will pour the balm of hope, and as far as I know how, of repentance, upon the canker of sin, that you say is eating away your heart! Yes, by my prayers, I will endeavour to reconcile you with heaven; while we live together in this world, I will be the consoler, and—for Providence has given me the means to do it—the cherisher of your earthly lot! Yes, yes! and I will sooth your death-bed, too; I will whisper into your dying ear the promise of that mercy, from your God, which I now kneel to beg of you for myself!"

The woman intertwined her fingers, crossed her hands over her forehead and eyes, and sobbed.

"Oh, I see it!" pursued Anny, "compassion for a woman in misery is yet in your nature! you will—you will—be my best friend, and preserver!"

"Whist!" said the wretch, as she

hastily uncovered her face. Tears, newly struck out of the rock—her own heart—trickled through furrows made by the wrinkles that she had truly called untimely; and, as she raised her skinny finger to claim attention, her eyes fixed kindlily, humanely, and, indeed, almost with the expression of the womanly protection for which Anny had pleaded, upon her unhappy young prisoner.

"Yes, the hour of your thrial is come; but, be of stout heart; lift up your sperrits, and pray the good God you believe in!"—

The woman turned her eyes towards the croaky, creaking door; it was flung open; and the bug-bear of our tale stood within its threshold.

"And the time is come, too, to use the paper, that the Mayor of Wind-gap gave you;" whispered the woman suddenly.

"Retire!" said the strange man of the Inch, in a voice of stern and established

authority. The miserable individual he addressed did not seem to have the slightest power of daring to disobey his command. She quickly passed him, and left the appartment. He closed the door.

After the whispered hint of her late attendant, Anny recollected that, since the day — not very long ago, indeed — upon which Maurteen Maher had given her the document in question, she had taken care to keep it about her person: now, while her heart throbbed almost to bursting, and while her eye remained as if spell-bound upon the countenance of the abhorred individual with whom she found herself alone, Anny confusedly searched for it. But, in her great agitation, as also in her womanly disinclination to manifest her actions, Anny's trembling fingers made a useless attempt.

Her companion turned round and approached her. As he advanced, she retreated, step by step.

"Now, beautiful Anny, do not shun me in this way," he said, whether in a tone of conciliation or of irony, it must have been an experienced and a nice ear which could have judged. "This is certainly not a very elegant place to pay my respects to you in; but it is by necessity, not by choice, that I meet you under its lowly roof. There was no admission for me in your own house; I would not take the liberty of inviting you to mine, as it is a bachelor's establishment, you know; and, therefore, we meet upon the first neutral ground nearest at hand; but no matter where, dearest girl, since I at last enjoy the bliss of speaking with you; — of declaring to you how much I have suffered in the want of such an opportunity, since the first blessed day my eyes rested upon you; or, indeed, as the sensible people about here say, my *one* eye,—though, perhaps, if it were necessary, I could shew, for your particular satisfaction, a pair of

them; and so, my beloved Anny Kennedy,——"

"Man!" interrupted Anny, "dreadful, though, let me tell you, not *now* dreaded, man! dare not to come near me, if you would not trample upon my corpse." Her hands were still moving rapidly about her person.

"Tut! tut! my all-beauteous queen; 'tis a sin in you, a mortal sin, to talk so; leave death to revenge himself on old age and deformity, but speak of living, and of living only, and for happiness, too, while your young bloom is upon you. Enchanting Anny! I am not the scarecrow you have been used to think I am; come, I can woo with smiles, if you wish it, as nice as any petit mâitre." He took her hand, and encircled her with his arm; a scream of direst agony burst from Anny.

"Be calm, dearest girl, be calm! *I* do not intend to be rough, or offensive; there, sit you down, and do not tremble so;" and

he placed her rather gently, for him, upon one of the ricketty chairs, and sat upon the other, some distance from her.

Anny glared at him with a frenzied eye, and, with both her hands, grasped her frail seat, as if it could have been a protection to her.

"Oh yes, yes, I see it;—they have been frightening you with absurd stories of me, Anny; and I told you as much at our first interview;—Oh, to be sure, the old gabblers have put it into your head, that the good, respectable devil (I always speak deferentially of every body, 'tis a safe habit), and myself have been 'hail-fellows, well-met;' but I don't recollect the exact spot of ground, or the exact ship, or even the little drinking parlour, in which we have ever yet sat down together. One thing, however, I do frankly admit;—I am, by nature, the adorer, the slave, the humblest, the most abject slave, of woman's beauty. It ever has ruled, and it now does, and it ever must,

rule my lot on earth; and if there be another, and a happier, and a pleasanter world, in that other, too; come, dearest Anny, and I call you sensible Anny, into the bargain, because I know every body gives you a character for understanding and intellect, beyond your years; — but, come, as one of the most buggaboo things about me, have they not told you of a one-half of my visage that is demoniacally frightful? and of a certain mark upon this cheek, which you have not yet seen?—and, yet, beautiful Anny, need I tell you, that I can refute all their gossip, as I now do their humbug tales, upon *this* score, at least? pray do look, Anny; do look up at me, and see if the mark of the devil's claw is really visible to your maiden eye."

There certainly was a smile of male coquetry in the now unclouded brow of the strange Man, as he fully unveiled his features; nor was the smile wanting in stern beauty. And gashes certainly appeared,

though at present cicatrized upon his hitherto disguised cheek; but none that could not be accounted for, by fair encounter, on the battle-field, nor reconciled with a general impression of manly comeliness. At a somewhat younger age, and without a wound, the strange Man's countenance must certainly have been handsome. As he playfully twitched off his black handkerchief, Anny's nerves quivered almost to madness, or dissolution; so confused and so enervated was her state of mind, that Grace Carroll's late anecdotes had real power over it; and she could not help expecting to see, upon the half of his face hitherto shut up (like an awkward wing of an old house, that is not to be let along with the rest of the premises), the fearful marks which her poor maid, nay, which even the strange Man himself had hinted, might be found stamped upon it. All feelings are, in their strength, relative; and when Anny discovered, however, that there was nothing

so very terrible in the appearance or expression of the whole of the strange man's features, she certainly experienced a little relief.

"Well, Anny, after all they say, am I, or am I not, a proper man enough?" again approaching her; for even the slight change in Anny's sensations did not escape his practised observation.

But now her agonies returned; nay, became augmented. Her hands suddenly ceased their rapid and nervous search, and she clasped them tightly together, as, in deep despair, she muttered to herself—

"Gone, gone, gone—and my last hope with it!"

"What is gone? and what do you mean by that pretty phrase, my beauty?" He still moved his chair; she had pushed her's close to the wall.

The smile and glance, accompanying these words, produced through Anny's frame that kind of spasmodic affection of disgust, which

and you!—And how, then,—" and she could utter no more.

"How, then, does it follow, you would ask, that I see any reason to wish to make his daughter, also, my dear friend—aye, and upon my own terms?—I have taken the question from your own dear lips; and I will answer it—thus:—Yes, Anny Kennedy, it is exactly because your father and I were such very dear friends that your father's daughter is here, to-night."

"If you knew him so well, who was my father?"—

"Who was your father?—Who *is*, you mean?—The man who, very naturally, has brought you up; the man you live with; the man from whose house I have enticed you hither."

"He is not!—I know he is not!—You now invent a falsehood for some devilish purpose!"

"No, Anny; I am sure of what I say;

Connor Kennedy is your father; though, so closely was it his practice to keep his little amusements, that neither I nor any one else can hint to you who your mother might have been. Yes; and that same Connor Kennedy once was the dear friend I have spoken about. A reptile!—" continued the strange Man, suddenly bursting into passion, and stamping on the clay floor, while his brows became tangled into a hateful frown, his cheeks pale, his eyes flashing, his lips fiercely curving, and almost frothing—"A reptile!—First, a low, mean, crawling reptile—then, a slimy, wriggling, slippery, evading reptile—and at last, an ungrateful, base, dastardly, reptile—who, while he was nurtured *here*—here on my heart—and while I slept—trustingly, happily slept—stung me, right over that very heart—aye, shot and spat his own very venom into it, till its core and veins became poisoned—poisoned into a circulation of liquid, running fire—poisoned into rage—

into madness—into detestation of its fellow hearts—and till, at length, it can feel no joy but of that revenge upon him, in some thing like the fashion of wrong for wrong—measure for measure!"

He strode up and down the small apartment, as might a yet untamed tiger in his new cage. Anny was terrified into absolute silence. He suddenly stopped and loodke upon her; and his features half-changed into a different though, a not less fearful expression, as he went on—

"You have heard me, Anny Kennedy!—Your father was that viper to me! after heaping kindness upon his head—and—idiot that I was!—casting my heart's affection, too, upon the heap—he robbed me—meanly, treacherously, robbed me of the woman whom, in early youth, I loved better than my own soul—and who, had he permitted her to become mine, might have swayed and softened that soul into something good among men—and perhaps saved it for a hereafter!—But tush, tush!—no matetr

now!—We are quits at last!—You, Anny Kennedy, stand before me—*his* daughter—Connor Kennedy's daughter!—Aye, and by Heaven, full as beautiful, and I believe as pure, as her of whom he plundered me!"

Anny's shrieks again arose terrifically.

"The paper! the paper!—" whispered a voice close at her ear. Despairing, and agonized as she was, Anny could, with an instant's glance, ascertain that the voice came through a chink in the slight and frail wall, or rather partition, at her back.—"God help me! I have it not!"—she answered, aloud.—And then her poor shrieks continued, piercing up higher and higher. The awakened ruffian held her in his grasp. Her delicate attire became discomposed; her maiden neck despoiled of its fragile covering. By a touch of her own spasmed hands, she ascertained this fact: and instantly glancing downwards, further discovered a sealed paper, half-pushing out from beneath her corset;—one moments' strength

she was then able to summon up;—nerved by it, she hurled her assaulter some distance from her;—snatched the now fully recognised document from its hiding place; stretched it forward to him at arm's length; and, panting and gasping, and swallowing down her words, said—

"Here—read this—'tis for you!"

He plucked it from her hand. She crossed her arms over her bosom, and was still able to stand upright, on her tottering limbs, watching him. It has been noticed that there was but one feeble taper in the miserable apartment. To this he went; broke the heavy and rude seal of the letter addressed to him, and began to peruse it.

Anny's eyes devoured his movements, and the expression of his features. The talisman was in his hand!—For good or for evil to her?—She saw him start—frown—look amazed and baffled — angry and tamed—incredulous and shaken——: twice he read the writing, and then hollowed

out ——"A lie!—a lie, by the heaven!—Who gave you this?"— springing back, and scowling upon Anny.

She was about to pronounce her old friend's name; but although Maurteen Maher had not formally bound her to secrecy—nay, although, in a jocose way, he had told her to give his compliments, with the letter, to the strange Man—still, a generous fear of evil result that night to him, at the hands of so desperate a character, checked her tongue, and she answered that she would not reveal who was the writer.

"What!—refuse to yield up the author of this annoying falsehood!—Do you not dread my vengeance?"

"No! I dread you, now, in nothing!"—she courageously answered:—"for, attempt to deny it, as you may—the paper tells you truth—and you know it does—and I am safe!—and I defy you!"——she sank down at last.

The ferocious, as well as strange, Man, after looking at her, scrutinizingly, and, perhaps, at last, kindly, seemed awed; at least, by her words and manner, if, indeed, they had not helped to convince him of the assertions of Maurteen Maher's epistle;—and he muttered aside—

"By the word! and that speech was not like the daughter of Connor Kennedy and some unknown obscure peasant—"

He then placed his hand upon a chair; raised it up slowly; put it down again, in the middle of the floor; sat upon it, his hands hanging by his side; and continued to gaze, attentively, if not respectfully, at Anny.

She was still sunk upon her weak limbs, powerless, but not afraid, before him; her gentle arms were still closely folded over her neck. After a pause, he arose; pushed open the crazy door, and called loudly into the other apartment — "A cup of water here!"

Immediately Anny's late attendant re-entered, with the beverage he had demanded; —"Ask that young lady to taste it," he continued: — "And, hark ye; place her cloak round her shoulders, and seat her as comfortably as you can upon the bed-side."

"I will sit up," said Anny, "if I can; but not if you approach me."

"I will not touch you, now," he answered, in a tone which Anny could not at all understand.

With the assistance of the woman, she was, however, soon disposed of at her ease, comparatively speaking.

"Leave us again—" resumed the strange Man; and, as before, his vassal hurried out of the room.

"Let her stay—let her stay!" requested Anny.

"No, if you please; for I now really wish to interchange a word with you, which no one must overhear. She is, however,

outside this door, and a loud sound of your voice may call her.—Be calmer, therefore, I entreat you;—and when I do entreat you, be assured you may be calm.—You told me, a while ago, that you were not Connor Kennedy's child. What grounds had you for saying that?"

"His own assertions," answered Anny—"which I take as the truth, sooner than those of any other living creature."

"Hum—that's nothing;—nothing at all. Has he not told you who really are your parents?"

"No; I know not, from any source of information, who are my father and mother; but I am sure that Connor Kennedy is not my father—and I am also sure that if you knew my father, as you assert, you must have known my mother too; and that, therefore, this may procure us both more particular information on the subject."

She undid from her neck the ribbon which sustained the miniature-portraits of

which mention has before been made, and handed the locket to him.

Again he hurried to the taper; again he became passionately and wildly affected; and after some time asked her,—"And from whose hand did you receive this?"

"From my mother's—on her dying bed."

"You speak the holy truth, now?"

"I do—to the utmost of my belief and knowledge."

"Well, that's enough—that must do"—he again fixed his eyes upon the locket, turning it from side to side.—He paused—he sighed—he smiled—he laughed.—He rose up deliberately, muttering—"a strange, strange world."

"Girl, I am cheated out of my revenge for the present;"—he resumed, aloud;—though, perhaps, not quite that, either; let us not conclude too hastily; we will look into this affair;—and even if my dear revenge does escape me in this shape, there

may be another road to an old,—a long-hoped object."—

Anny was left alone—she had scarce leisure to return thanks to Heaven when the priestess of these mysterious ceremonies once more re-appeared before her.

"The paper makes you quiet for the present"—she said—"God grant that things may turn up so as to keep us both quiet for the time to come!"

Tears were again in the unhappy creature's eyes: Anny threw her arms round her neck—placed her head confidingly on her sinful shoulder, and cried plentifully over the beatings of her sinful heart.

CHAPTER III.

EVEN upon occasions almost common-place to other men, George Blundell was the creature of passion. It will not therefore be wondered at that, in his present situation, he felt fearfully affected;—in fact, the world had scarcely yet tamed down, in the slightest degree, his youthful impulses to prepossession on any object. His love for Anny, and her love for him, had become the very essence of his existence. An anticipation of losing her, when only called up, in moments of real security, by self-torment-

ing fancy, had never failed to melt him into tears, or rouse him into absurd vehemence; while he used to sit, quite sure of her affections, and of her guardian's permission to visit her, alone at his winter fire-side, or upon the roots of an old tree, or upon the river's-bank, in summer.

It would therefore be difficult to describe him in his present abode. The door of his cell was closed upon him. He stood in the middle of its narrow floor. "I have lost her!" he said—"she has been forced from me for ever! and it is my father," he added, laughing idiot-like—"'tis my own father, to whom I am indebted for that!" — This idea grew into certainty, until he nearly felt the impulse to dash himself headlong against the rough walls that surrounded him. Despair—dull, dogged despair followed. Against one of those walls he now leaned his right shoulder; his arms we may say, fell from him, and hung unmoved at his sides. He

could not be said to think, or perhaps, even distinctly to feel. He subsequently called to mind, that, after his sullen, leaden fit, though at what time he could not tell, he had become suddenly, and as it were only physically impelled to rush to the door of his prison, in the mad and vague thought of bursting it open; and that then he had fallen down on his mattress, quite exhausted, and forgetful of every thing.

A night and part of a day passed on, and he seemed to sink into a gloomy, brooding, idle moroseness. Food had been offered to him, but he did not even think of it. The turnkey had appeared, and disappeared, and no word escaped his lips; nor had sleep relieved him for one instant.

It was again the noon of a day. The turnkey entered; placed a letter in his hands; and, making a sign of caution, quitted the cell.

George Blundell glanced at the superscription; and he was instantly erect on

his feet, his face flushed, and his hand trembling. Muttering its contents to himself, with dried and white lips, he hastily ran over the epistle.

"What!" he cried, "what is this? am I really the maniac wretch I have shuddered to think I might become? Have I not toiled hard to cool down my boiling blood, and to still my throbbing temples? Or have my eyes lost their power of sense? No; it is a letter, and in her hand-writing. Well; I may have misunderstood its meaning. I have been in this place for some time, without sleep or food, and perhaps am not now able to see or to understand rightly; so I will try and man myself, and then read it again."

He did so; it began,

"I am compelled to write to you by an authority which I must not gainsay—"

"Compelled to write to me? And was compulsion necessary, Anny? By an authority you must not gainsay? What au-

thority? and she was preceding the word "authority" with the term "dear," and then blotted it out. There is fearful mystery in this. But let me read on.

"And I write for the purpose of informing you that you are no longer to think of me as you have done; that, by all and every means in your power, you must expel from your heart its love for me. If I am to judge by the struggle in my own bosom, this will be a truly difficult task for you; but you are called upon to attempt it; nay, to master it. In explanation, I am permitted only to say, that I never can be your wife, for that an unpassible barrier has been suddenly placed between us. But, whatever may be the consequences, I will add that I am very, very miserable in the new circumstances which surround me. Is it not a terrible thing to feel repugnance where I am called on to bestow affection—where, indeed, it is now my duty to bestow it? For further satisfaction on this unhappy subject, I can but

refer you to him who *was* my guardian—Mr. Connor Kennedy. Farewell. Farewell.

ANNA."

Spite of continued interruptions on the part of George Blundell, we have given the remainder of this letter in an unbroken form to the reader. The nature of his interruptions will be easily guessed at, though we do not venture to define them. We can only coldly narrate certain conclusions upon which the young man's mind jumped, after fully comprehending the words—and indeed but the words alone—of what had been written to him.

A barrier? and one that he could not pass? Who dared to erect it? Who dared to say that he was unable to over-leap any barrier, no matter what in nature, which the craft, or the cunning, or the skill, or the malice, or the villany of man was capable of building up between him and his soul's idol? Tush!—Fools or scoundrels were but imposing on her fears, or her judgment.

Tush! by heaven, he thought it were an an easy thing to swim across an Atlantic without resting, or clear an Alp at a bound, so that Anny Kennedy could be made sure of at the far-side of either.

But he would still try to understand this mysterious letter. — Again, what was the nature of the barrier it spoke of? She could never be his wife. Why? George Blundell suddenly felt that he comprehended the whole question. Anny Kennedy could, now, never be his wife, only because she had become, or was about to become, the wife of another! Of what other? His father? No. Evil as was the nature of that father, a thought so horrible could not be entertained. "I refer you to him *who was* my guardian;" *who was* my guardian. And how had he ceased to be her guardian? How, but by changing his position towards her;—how, but by becoming her husband! Oh! I thank God for that thought; for now my hand can fall—unstained by a parent's

blood—upon the head of the true hypocrite, and of the true villain. Blood! did I say blood? Fie, fie; no, not that: but I will question him; I will question him: and were he coiled up tenfold in his duplicity, he must give plain answers to an outraged and most miserable creature."

George Blundell turned to the door of his cell, as if to depart; he soon became reminded that he was a prisoner, and then he again fell upon his straw, exhausted and groaning wretchedly.

For many hours, indeed, he lay as still as if life had quitted him, his blood-shot eyes vaguely fixed on a point. The turnkey again entered; he deliberately arose and demanded who had been the bearer of the letter? The man could, or would, only answer that it had been delivered at the goal door by a person unknown to him. A heavy bribe induced him, however, not only to furnish his prisoner with writing materials, but also to engage to have conveyed

to its destination a letter which George Blundell proposed immediately to begin. So, the young man wrote to Mr. Connor Kennedy; and, when the epistle was dispatched, he turned to his food and ate it voraciously.

The following were the contents of this letter:

"I presume, sir, it is not without your "knowledge that I have received to-day a "note from Anny; she who was to have "been *my* Anny; mine, by the ties of mu- "tual and admitted affection;—by mutual "pledges;—by mutual vows and oaths.—But "now she informs me that she never can "be my wife; for that 'there is an impassi- "ble barrier suddenly placed between us;' "and she instructs me to apply to you for a "full explanation of her strange and ob- "scure words. You know well, for it must "have been by your contrivance, that your "servant gave the false testimony of which I

" I am momentarily the victim;—you know " well I cannot wait upon you; and that, " therefore, my demand for an explanation " must, for the present, confine itself to " writing. But I caution you not to dally " or trifle with me. No one is better aware " than yourself how unjustly I am detained " here; but, Mr. Kennedy, as surely as I am " an innocent man, I shall speedily be free " again; and then, sir, we can meet face to " face, should your refusal to satisfy me at " present make necessary so dangerous an " interview.

" Your's,

" As you may deserve of me,

" GEORGE BLUNDELL."

In vain did the writer of this spirited epistle turn his eye to the prison door, for hours and hours after he had sent it away, in expectation of an answer. Mr. Kennedy vouchsafed no reply, either personally or in writing. George Blundell roared, and foam-

ed, and stamped, and threatened: still to no purpose. Another sleepless, horrible night passed over his head: — another wretched morning half-dawned upon him through the single iron-grated window, or rather aperture, of his cell. About noon, perhaps, his usual attendant re-appeared, placed a packet in his hand, and at once left the apartment. George Blundell eagerly tore it open. It contained a very small saw, a file, a little bottle of oil, and a note without signature or direction, and certainly not in Mr. Kennedy's hand-writing.

"If you desire to learn tidings of "Anna Kennedy, lose no time in availing "yourself of the means of escape herewith "afforded to you. With the file and the "saw cut away three of the bars of your "prison window; be sure to use the oil "freely; it will prevent noise, and facilitate "your work. Go on steadily and cautious-"ly, and you need fear no interruption. If,

"by the time your door is secured for the "night, you have succeeded, remove the "bars. You will find a ladder to the win- "dow, on the outside; descend it at once; "but take care not to do so before the hour "already specified. At the foot of the lad- "der you will meet a person awaiting you; "accost him not; don't utter a whisper; "but follow him silently, and he will lead "you to one who can fully satisfy you on "all the points you at present want to have "cleared up."

Carefully, very carefully, notwithstand- the feverish state of his mind and body, did George Blundell follow these directions of his unknown, though experienced, friend. With might and main he worked, and with- out an instant's cessation; and yet so stealthily that he could scarce have dis- turbed a mouse in his cell. Before the last nightly visit had been paid to him, his task was done; the bars being cut through,

at either side, and only artificially retained in their places; and, when his cell door was closed upon him, he quickly removed those previously formidable obstacles between him and liberty. At a glance he recognized the promised ladder: at another, though dimly seen in the dark, the promised figure of a man, at its foot. The next instant he was descending from the window; and the next was in a narrow lane which skirted the rear of the goal. And now the person who had been waiting for him stood at some distance, closely muffled up, and making signs to him to follow. Without speaking a word, as he had been instructed to do, George Blundell pursued the steps of his dumb guide, who immediately began to walk rapidly away. But before leaving the spot, he observed two other men steal towards the ladder, lower it, and hurry off with it in an opposite direction, on their shoulders.

He threaded, after his conductor, the least frequented streets which, in that

quarter of the town, led to to the suburbs. They then made a wide circuit of the environs, and, at length, without passing through the city, stopped in an obscure street, at that side of it which was opposite to, and most remote from, the prison. The man gave a single and a cautious knock at the door of a mean-looking-house; it was instantly opened. A dull lamp lighted the stair-case. The guide stood still at the bottom of the stairs, and motioned to George Blundell to ascend them. George did so, and rapidly entered a room at their head. He looked around him; he was alone; but he heard a heavy foot coming up after him; and, in a few seconds, his flashing and questioning eyes fixed upon the person of the strange Man of the Inch.

CHAPTER IV.

THE youth strated back, confounded—"So, you are your own man again," observed his companion, smiling drily.

"And I owe my liberation to you—father?"

"To be sure you do; who else but a near friend would go to any trouble about you?"

"You wrote the note, and sent me the things that accompanied it?" again asked George, thoughtfully, and with a painful motive for his curiosity.

"I—I—I—and was not that said note to

the purpose? Didn't it understand business?" said the strange Man, with a strange laugh.

"May I enquire who gave you the very useful information it contained? The confidant of your plot for my escape, I suppose? The person who awaited me at the ladder's foot?"

"Do not speak 'of the *ladder's foot*,' my boy; 'tis an awkward expression. But you are right in one thing, and wrong in another; or rather you are right and wrong together. I consulted with nobody — nor was it necessary I should have done so — upon the means of getting you out of that little, high, iron-barred window —— You foolish cub!—do you think nobody ever cut through an iron-bar, before this evening, but yourself?—and as to the man who led you from that place to this, he is here with you now; for, in truth, I only shunned the eyes of the persons of this house, to take off my disguise before I would come up to

you;—because, although they are particularly in my confidence—and a good many others, too, along with them,—I don't want to make a bother about every thing."

"So then," said George, "you know all about the file, and saw, and oil, from your own experience?"

"Certainly, my lad;—and do you, at this moment, wish that I had never known any thing about them?"

George Blundell remained for some time sitting thoughtfully. Without his observation, the strange Man had closely watched him, and now he said in his most possibly-softened tone—

"I suppose you have had suspicions of me, George?"

"Yes," answered George, deeply, and hoarsely—"Yes, I have had suspicions of you;—horrid, hellish suspicions!"

"Ah, you need not say it so vehemently;—Yes, I have been told as much;—people have hinted all that to me; yes; a day or

two ago, they might have convinced you I had something to do with the abduction of Miss Anna Kennedy."

"And it is not you who have forced her away?" asked George.

"How could I, my boy? Listen to me—I will be perfectly candid with you. Anna has certainly been borrowed, a few evenings since, from the house of her nominal guardian. But, if *I* had taken her away, why should I have coaxed you out of your nice little crib, merely that we should meet here, face to face, and that I should be ready to answer any of your questions about her?"

"I don't see a good reason why you should have done so," replied George; "but before we go any further, answer me one other little question—Father and son, as we sit here together,—answer me one other little question!—will you, will you?"

"Pooh—nonsense,—to be sure I will;—what is it?"

"You knew nothing *whatever* of the vio-

lence committed on Anny Kennedy, before it occurred?"

The laugh which now escaped George Blundell's companion was so loud, so long, and yet so seemingly innocent, that it at once startled and confounded—if it did not convince—his methodical catechist.

"Swear to it by Heaven!" cried George.

"I swear to it by Heaven!" answered his agreeable associate.

"And swear to it by Hell!"—

"Oh—that is still more easy; so I swear to it by Hell; as also by the pleasant places that surround that port; banks, rivers, shoals, sands, caves, and so forth; and all the other little things that make an ugly harbour seem agreeable to the eye."

"But you have now sworn solemnly?" re-urged George Blundell.

"I have, very solemnly. Do you wish me to swear by anything else? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I must be contented, I suppose, with your declaration.—Well; you have set

me free; and I thank you. And you have done me that service, too, under a promise of satisfying me upon all the points connected with Anny, which I want to have cleared up. First, then,—With whom am I to reckon for the outrage committed upon her?—Can you point your finger distinctly to the man."

"I can, very easily."

"Name him, then!" cried George Blundell, starting up, fiercely.

"A Mr. Connor Kennedy."

"Ha!—My surmises were not unfounded!"—

"And,—now,—little Anny's husband," continued the strange Man, smiling quietly.

"The villain!—the deep, deep, hypocritical villain!"

"Ah! yes, indeed; you may well call him that."

"So!"—continued George, walking like a mad man about the room; "I read aright, then, the meaning of her letter to me, the

other day; this *was*—*this is* the impassable barrier, so suddenly placed between us!"

"Her letter to you the other day?—You have received one from her, have you, since you were betrayed to prison by that man?"

"I have—and here it is," answered George, snatching it from his pocket.

"May I read it?"

George handed it to him. He perused it attentively.

"Why, aye; this certainly was enough to make you come to the true conclusion. Aye, aye; 'he who *was* her guardian;' any one may complete the sentence by adding, "And who is my husband."

"Sir," pursued George, "before I take a step—and a serious one, give me the fullest proof that Kennedy and Anny are, at present, man and wife."

"Suppose I could not adduce stronger proof than this very letter, which you have yourself just handed to me, were it not sufficient?—Proof positive, however, I can

and will give you; more of that anon.—First, let us see if we understand each other as to the character and nature of the man you are called upon to reckon with.—You have heard, I presume, that, though now rich, he once was poor—abjectly poor—that the riches he now possesses are the rightful property of the very person who rescued him from his low estate; and that with the most unutterable ingratitude, and with the most devilish duplicity, he disinherited, in fact, his early benefactor, who loved him?"

George Blundell nodded assent.

"Well; as we pass along, we may reason a little upon this Mr. Connor Kennedy. Have you any good grounds for being sure that, at about forty, he is not the same kind of man he was at about twenty? That he is now incapable of deceiving *you*, in something of the same way, though not half so foully as he once deceived the patron and cherisher of his youth?"

"No—I have no such grounds."

"What has been your own opinion of him, during your acquaintance with him?—Favourable or unfavourable?"

"Unfavourable; even in the teeth of his ward's assurances, I always disliked his manners, his language, and his appearance; and suspected his principles."

"And you might have made worse guesses than those. Very good. Let us go on, coolly.—You waited on Connor Kennedy the other day—or you met him in his house, I believe, though you had not wished to see him; and then you pleaded hard for an interview with Anny. How did he act towards you on that occasion?"

"I remember it well; with cunning and want of candor;—first, he would have evaded my question altogether, then he left the room, promising to use his influence with her to come down to me;—and at last I got a message importing that she would not come down to me, in consequence of

his prohibition; oh! I do remember it."

"Good again. After that, however, you did see her, and became reconciled with her; almost immediately, her abduction followed; and then, to put you out of the way, a trumpery charge of being concerned in that abduction was made against you;—and upon it—mainly supported by one of his own warrants, mark you—you were sent to the common gaol, from which I have just released you. Couple all these facts with Anny's letter to you, and do you longer require proofs of the present real state of the case? Proof, in fact, of my assertion that Connor Kennedy is now the husband of the woman who had sworn to wed no man but yourself?"

"No!" cried George Blundell, "it is as clear as the day-light."

"Well; still a little step farther. You are referred, I see, by this letter, to an explanation with your old friend, Mr. Kennedy; have you demanded it?"

"I have! I have!" replied George, his impatience and fury every moment increasing.

"And was it quite a satisfactory explanation?"

"Hell and earth! do not mock at me! The villain has returned no answer of any kind!"

"There, again. But observe the innocence of the world's ways, shewn by the artless young creature who wrote you this letter. His dupe and his victim, by means and wiles which, as yet, we do not even guess at, she is still simple-hearted enough to think that the man who has deceived you both, and, by subornation of perjury, cast you into a dungeon, whence he could dream of your departure only by the road to the gallows—that *he*—that such a man—would stand before your face, and give you a fair and full account of the machinery by which he robbed you of your young and beautiful, and accomplished, and pure-minded Anny."

George Blundell was now walking slowly up and down the apartment, his brows dragging down over his burning eyes, his hands clenched, and his teeth sunk into his bleeding lip.

"I knew that man, of old—that Connor Kennedy," pursued his companion, speaking in a low, deliberate manner.

George Blundell suddenly stopped, and looked intently at him.

"Yes, George, my son; I knew him well, more than twenty years ago. Attend to me, boy. You are now about to hear more of me than you have yet become acquainted with; and my story may help to enlighten you still more upon the steps you ought to take in your present great and unmerited misfortunes. Attend to me.

"I have already told you that I left my native country in my youth; that I was shipwrecked, and cast naked, friendless, and pennyless, on a far-off coast; and that afterwards I became a merchant, and real-

ized wealth by many years of profitable traffic. In this latter statement, however, I did not rightly instruct you, and for the following reasons. At the first meeting between us, which you are capable of remembering, I found you a brave, bold boy, and I did not wish, by giving you a real account of my path to fortune, to arouse, perhaps, your boyish wish to follow in my steps. Although most unfortunate and most injured, and the world would add, no strict honourer of some of its laws, I would not hold out my life as an example to you. No; I wished you to remain in your native land, boy, honoured, respected, and happy. You are already aware that my first visit to Ireland, after my shipwreck, was for the purpose of seeking you out, and providing for the nurture of your infancy and your childhood; and—"

"Stop father—" said George Blundell; "is your real name that which you at present asume, and have given to me?"

"You anticipate me but by a little," answered the strange Man of the Inch; "I had nearly come to that very point; I will therefore answer you distinctly. My name is Henry Stokesbury, not Philip Blundell."

"Impossible! he perished at sea! so at least those said who have ever mentioned that unhappy man to me."

"It is not impossible, George. It is true. I am the man. And need I therefore repeat to you that, twenty years ago, I knew your Connor Kennedy, well?"

"No, indeed," answered George; "although but vaguely acquainted with his story and your's, it has ever been my impression that you met with very unworthy treatment at his hands."

"Unworthy treatment!" scoffed the narrator, with one of his often terrible laughs. "You use charitable language, George, towards the destroyer of your father. And you are but vaguely acquainted, you say

with our joint story? Well—a few words will soon supply that deficiency."

As he proceeded in his narration, Henry Stokesbury, whenever the recollection of his own early injuries wrought upon his fiery nature, seemed almost hurried into personal contact with the individual, and the circumstances to which he chiefly alluded; his tone and actions would become fearfully impetuous; his eyes would flash, his lips would foam. During other parts of his recital his manner and himself seemed to change, on the contrary, into something of the freshness of youthful feeling; as if, indeed, feeling could still have been fresh within him. And again, when it was his object to work a purpose upon his listener, he would become cool and effective; giving expression to that mingled craft and passion which, perhaps, his life's course had interwoven in his character.

"George," he said, "I can commiserate your feelings and sufferings; for even as

you feel, and suffer, I have felt and suffered; and even as you have been wronged, cajoled, and outraged, so have I been; nay, and in almost the same circumstances, and by the same man. You love your Anny; at your age, I loved a creature at least her equal; oh—Mary was indeed formed to soften the trubulent spirit of man, as does a night in June, when the air is still, and even its little breezes are nestling in the closed cup of the blossom? Oh yes—yes—I loved you, Mary, —and, gnarled as I am, the passion is in my pith to this day. And, George, I loved my mother—my good mother, too! and with a full and fond affection. But, in my boyhood I lost her. A few months after her death, I found, by chance, a relation of hers, about my own age, in the most wretched state of poverty. He was friendless, houseless, naked, starving — a foot-ball, to be kicked by others in their sport. For my dead mother's sake, I protected the outcast, I snatched him to my bosom, and held firm

tight there. I brought him to my father's house, and warmed and fondled him at his hearth. He ate with me at the same board; his raiment was as mine own; I relished no sport, no pastime, which he did not share. I shared every thing with him—aye, even my heart; for even *him* I loved, thinking that I caught flittings of my mother's nature, and of her likeness, and of her character, in the milky blandness of his smiles; yea, in all he looked, or said, or did."

Stokesbury went on to describe, as others, even including himself, have described it, the double treachery of which he felt Connor Kennedy had been guilty. We compress his story; but for the necessary purpose of fully displaying his character, we must venture, even at the risk of being accused of tautology, to report his own expositions upon certain points and circumstances.

Taking him up, therefore, at his contin-

uation, of the account of his dire quarrel with his father, he speaks as follows:

"My father snatched a deadly weapon, my cousin's arms were flung around me—'For the love of peace, and for God's love,' he whimpered into my ears, while tears streamed down his cheeks—aye, the very tears ran from his crocodile eyes, as he softly cajoled me, in my mother's voice—and his wet cheek was laid to mine, and its watery chillness did, indeed, cool my boiling blood. 'For the love of blessed peace, and for God's dear love,' he whimpered—and mark you, his arms still twined round me—'Do not, oh, do not, stand up before your father's wrath! I will be your friend with him—the friend that, as you, and heaven know, I ought to be to you on every occasion!' aye, so he *said*, 'I will appease,' quoth he, 'your father's terrible passion—I will be the peace-maker between ye; I will reconcile the maniac parent with the hasty son; oh, turn away a moment

from his door, and nothing will I leave undone to lead you back to it in peace! my heart's last drop, I will shed, if necessary to accomplish this! and" he continued, again appealing to heaven, 'the heavens can judge that life itself were but a trifling sacrifice for him who has done every thing for me.'

"So—I abided by the counsel of this cousin of mine. Driveller that I was! his influence over me had always been powerful; because, as I have said, my mother's features, my mother's voice, and my mother's tenderness of nature, seemed to be his; and the slightest word from that mother, during her suffering existence, and delivered in her plaintive accents, used ever to come upon my boyish stubborness, like gentle, taming music. So, so—my good cousin, led me to the threshold of my father's door; saw me depart from it; and returned into my father's house, shutting its door on himself. Afterwards, we often conferred together in the

neighbourhood; for still, and still, he kept up a shew of endearing affection. And his efforts to persuade my father into a forgiving mood, were not, he said, as speedily successful as he had reckoned on, and he therefore advised a temporary absence from my native place, for the purpose of keeping from my father's ears gossipping stories to my prejudice. Again, I complied with his counsel, receiving from his hands liberal means, I know not how acquired for my journey. Yes; I abandoned not only the paternal roof, but home itself; and I parted in rage against my father, because, as my cousin told me, forsooth, he would not be reconciled to his only son—his only child.

"Whither I went, or who became my associates in my obscure exile, it is unnecessary to say. Twelve months elapsed; I heard, by chance, of my father's death, and I hurried home to possess my own inheritance, and to snatch my betrothed bride to my bosom. But before I had quite reached

my journey's end, what were the tidings I learned, think you?"

We again pass over Henry Stokesbury's recapitulation of the acts of treachery with which he and, indeed, the world at large, charged Connor Kennedy.

"I was not formed by nature to bear a wrong tamely;" he continued; "I was not made of the sodden stuff that will yield to trampling, assuming whatever shape the trampler chooses to impress upon it. No! my brain took fire; it burned for vengeance! The law, as they call it, could, or would, yield me none; not even technical redress. The parchments, which had ratified the robbery of my birth-right were, of course, duly signed, and sealed, and delivered, as the phrase goes: aye, and properly witnessed, and carefully registered.—And, my Mary, she was in the villain's arms!"

George Blundell started up, sympathysing with the now fearful energy of the strange Man.

"Yes, yes! I see you can understand me. And as you feel now for the irretrievable loss of your Anny, so felt I then for that of my Mary. Yes! a craven, with liquid ice circulating through his heart, might have whined, and wept, and told his story to the dull ears of the law, or of the world, craving a little pity of the listeners, and experienced, in return, the cold superciliousness bestowed by all upon the wretch and the outcast. But that I did not stoop to:—that I did not attempt to do. This I *did*, —I went to my father's house, to my own house, I should say; I burst in my own doors; —I stood upon mine own hearth; and I confronted the reptile,—the rat, who had mined his way thither. Oh! by the eternal heavens! it was a sight worth the seeing! That detected knave quailing before me! But not long did I allow him to quail;—I struck him to my foot!—I trod upon his carcass! —and I left him, as I thought, a venomous thing, with the life crushed out of him!

"But even in this he deceived me; aye, once again the cousin cozened me. He recovered his vile breath;—he lived on his vile life:—yea, and he has lived it on, to play with you the same game that he so adroitly practised upon me.

"Well, I was seized on the spot, while he yet enacted the part of the dead knave at my feet. I was dragged to a dungeon. I was put to the bar of justice;—no, not to the bar of justice; for justice would never have stood up for the despoiler, and wreaked her vengeance on the outraged. No! but I was placed at that bar where wily villainy is legalized in set terms. I cared little for my fate. I had been made a desperate man. My hopes of earthly happiness, my means of earthly subsistence, my every thing, had been torn from me; and at that bar there was but one chance I wished for. I longed, Oh! how I longed, to see my gentle cousin come forward to give his testimony against me! Nay, I slept not, night after night, before my trial,

for pondering over and arranging the exposure which I should make of this monster before the world's face! But, on this occasion, he acted towards me as he did towards yourself, the other day, before the magistrates. With his own lips he spoke indeed, no word against either of us; from me he kept quite aloof; but his measures for the destruction of us both were, nevertheless, well taken, and well timed.—I have more to say to you on this subject.

"But, to continue my own frightful story. I cared not how they judged me. I hired no lawyer, no advocate. I attempted no defence of any kind. I was condemned. I was pronounced a criminal, for having entered my own rightful dwelling, and for having punished under its roof the villain who had despoiled me of it, and, with it, my affianced wife! Aye, I was condemned —I was sentenced. Aye, by heaven's light, I was banished from my native country; lopped off, as a canker that infected it! As a felon, they forced me from its shores:—

aye, as a *branded* felon! Do ye hear me, George Stokesbury? As a *branded* felon, I say. Look! look! let your own eyes bear witness to the truth of my assertion! look at it well. The mark of infamy! Look at it, boy: burned into your father's flesh! look! look!"

Flakes of foam were on his lips; his maniac eyes rolled fearfully; and his voice was attenuated to a scream, as he tore away his vesture, bared his right arm, and exhibited to the almost equally agitated George, the foul escutcheon of his degradation.

There was a long pause, during which Henry Stokesbury walked impetuously about the room. At length he stopped; and, of a sudden, his passion seemed to have flown. He came close to George Blundell; he peered under the young man's darkened brow, and said,—

"You will remember that I have exposed this arm to you, for I will challenge your recollection of the fact. Let me also

tell you, that when the red-hot, villain iron hissed into my blood, communicating its hellish ardour to my whole vital current, I felt,—I *felt*,—that, although not present, it was Connor Kennedy's own hand which ruthlessly stamped on my body the ineffacible record of a living, walking disgrace!—You attend?"

"No word that you have said is lost upon me," answered George Blundell.

They were again silent; Stokesbury resumed, coolly:

"You have heard my story. Well, from my twenty years' experience of Connor Kennedy, I have been able to trace him in all his slimy wiles against yourself; apply a scale to *your* chapter of wrongs, and to mine own, and do they not tally? And are you, therefore, surprised that it should have been in my power to render you such a service?"

"No," replied George; "and you *can* explain to me the motives for Mr. Kennedy's whole course of conduct towards me?"

"Listen, and decide if I cannot: and, as I go on, observe, I charge you again, how close a parallel runs between his treatment of you, at present, and his treatment of me, long ago."

"Anny Kennedy was bequeathed, by a dying father, to the care of her infamous betrayer. The will which gave Connor Kennedy this right over her, also endowed Anny with a large fortune. She grew up a lovely girl. From the first bloom of her young charms, her practised guardian coveted her person; her wealth he had always thirsted after. So, he sought to writhe himself into her favour; and his drivelling vanity, misinterpreting the common-place attentions she bestowed upon him, in gratitude for his care of her childhood, had nearly persuaded him of success, until his eyes were opened by the artless girl's admission of a preference for yourself. Then he endeavoured to wean her from you; but your Anny was faithful to you, George; and, by heaven, I can pity

you the loss, at last, of that sweet girl's affection!"

"I ask not your pity, sir; pity, even from you, I spurn. 'Twould be but a poor satisfaction for all I have endured. Go on, sir, I pray you."

His tempter, having eyed him with a sneer of fiendish triumph, continued:

"When Connor Kennedy found that she loved you, dearly and unalterably, for the good character you bore, among other things, —then began his plottings against you: your stolen visits to me he soon discovered. From my retired mode of life, and my necessarily equivocal position and habits,—for I would not have been recognized as the felon Harry Stokesbury,—idle rumour had circulated many things to my prejudice. Kennedy also became aware of this fact, and turned it to his own account. By his secret agents, he added to the disreputable insinuations against me, and, by degrees, involved your name with mine, in the odium attendant on

such lying stories. Nay, more. He actually caused outrages to be committed, and then had them charged on us both. Through the agency of a menial, a vile character whom he loads with bribes to ensure his services, he hired bravos, and, by their hands, in the first instance, and, mark you, while they personated you and me, the old man's daughter by the river-side, was forced off.

"When you were charged as my accomplice in this act, I could not stand forward as your vindicator, because that must have led to my identification as Henry Stokesbury; but I silenced the silly proceeding in the manner I have already stated to you. Do you begin to comprehend the occurrences of the last few weeks?"

"I attend to every thing you say."

"Well, having failed on this occasion, a deeper plot was laid against your only earthly hopes of happiness; indeed, against your life.

"In the dead of the night, Anny Kennedy herself was torn from her home. Tell me, how was entrance gained into Kennedy's house? how could it have been, but by his connivance? And observe, again. For four hours after her abduction, no notice was taken of the fact by him or by his household, for four long hours. And at the end of that lapse of time, Connor Kennedy's own faithful servant was discovered, forsooth, tied to his bed-post, and gagged, and so forth; and when they made him free to use his tongue again, this fellow it was who accused you of having been a party in the outrage committed on Anny Kennedy: nay, farther, he swore before the sage magistrates, that you had even assisted to tie him up and gag him, and otherwise maltreat him, did he not?"

"I remember," assented George.

"Yes, and upon that ruffian's testimony, you were sent to prison; and upon that ruffian's testimony, you were to be tried and

convicted, as a felon, had not I interfered to protect you; and, at least, sent, as I had been, from your native country, disgraced and—branded!"

"How did the hired abductors of Anny Kennedy dispose of her?" enquired George.

"They took her to a remote place, provided for the occasion, by her guardian;—guardian indeed! Ha! ha! and there she was informed, and she believed the information, that you were the perpetrator of the violence committed upon her; aye, and there, by more atrocious measures than even these, your poor Anny was compelled to become the wife of Connor Kennedy.,'

"How compelled?—what other and more atrocious measures do you speak of?"

"I will answer you in due course. Now for a proof I have promised you of the truth of some of my statements."

Stokesbury struck his heel violently twice, or thrice, against the floor: a deliberate tread was heard coming up stairs; and

Donnelly, Connor Kennedy's servant, entered the room.

"Do you know this man, George?"

"I do; he is the same you have just spoken of;—the same who swore falsely against me."

"Yes; he is that man. It was easy for me to surmise, knowing that he had been guilty of perjury, who had set him on, to destroy you; I sought him out, therefore, and found him as willing to betray his employer for a bribe, as he had been to take one from him."

This was said in a low tone to George; Henry Stokesbury went on aloud:—"Sirrah! relate to this young gentleman, as you have already related to me, the plots in which you have been engaged against him."

In a cold and unimpassioned tone and manner, Donnelly complied, verifying Stokesbury's previous accounts to George Blundell, of the wiles, the treachery, and the

baseness of Connor Kennedy; and to every question proposed by the young man, the scoundrel answered quietly, and to the purpose.

"From what motive did you engage in these matters with Mr. Kennedy?" demanded George Blundell.

"Why, then, 'pon my nate conscience, for the motive what people calls a long purse o' money."

"And you have since divulged Mr. Kennedy's secrets?" continued George.

"Yes, faith, an' so I have; an' does your honour want to know the motive, as you call it, over again? Ha! ha!"

"Yes, declare it."

"Glory to my sowl, then, bud it was for the motive of a longer purse of money than the one that went before it."

"You are satisfied, George?" demanded Stokesbury.

"Yes, yes, I am;" muttered the youth.

"Go down stairs, then, and await me

elsewhere," continued the strange Man of the Inch; and Donnelly went away, accordingly, as unconcerned as if he had but performed some every day business.

George Blundell's feelings were sunk too deeply into him to allow of much exterior exhibition of them. He continued silent. Stokesbury observed him keenly, giving him leisure to cogitate as well as he could, for a necessary period of time, upon all that had been presented to his mind. At length, he suddenly renewed, close to him, the former question.

"You say you are satisfied?"

George started from his black reverie, and looked into the eyes of his interrogator.

"You spoke to me, sir?"

"*Are* you satisfied?" again asked Stokesbury.

"Satisfied, sir?—let me see. Perhaps I do not quite understand the drift of your question?"

"I have told you before, George, that I had returned to this native land of mine, which, in my boyish days, cast me from its bosom, as it might have done one of its weeds upon the waters, only for the purpose of promoting and fixing your happiness. I have told you, and you know I can pro e it, that, through me, great riches awaited you, like flowers strewn under your foot, along your path of life; and, dear boy, had your Anny but been left to you, all my hopes, and, perhaps, more than all my hopes, in your regard, might have been realized."

The lad groaned, and, suddenly turning, said,—

"Now I recollect something. You told me a while ago that you would inform me by what means, and you called them atrocious when you alluded to them,—Anny has been compelled to become that man's wife?"

"Aye, and so I did; and that is rather

an important point. Let me explain it to you in a whisper."

He put his lips to George's ear, and slowly hissed into it a few words.

The youth started up ferociously."

"Beware, sir! Father, as you say you are to me, beware how you say *that!* You know not to what you urge me!

"I state but the fact, boy. In that lonely and savage place, she could feel no hope of escape, and of re-establishment in the world, after his measures towards her, but by consenting to become his wife. But how do you think he made this really appear to the eyes of uninterested persons? Are you listening to me?"

"I am; go on."

"Why, Mr. Connor Kennedy has done no more, nor less, than impress upon the minds of the good christians of his and our neighbourhood, that you, you, yourself, have been the causes of that certain blight on Anny's character; and that he, through pure chris-

tian charity, has, by becoming her husband, sacrificed himself to bind up in a kind of legal, technical way, her bruised reputation. And now, let me ask you, do these little facts help still further to explain Anny Kennedy's letter to you in your dungeon?"

"All is explained," answered George, in a deep, shivering, inward voice; "Yes—the explanation is full; and, oh! it has changed my blood into hot venom, and my heart into the hardest stone!—merciless—merciless, it has made me!—The wrongs against my father and against myself were, to be sure, sufficient to inspire me with a deadly purpose;—yet I tried to push the thought from me, while it prompted merely an act of vengeance. But now do I cease to be an avenger!"—he continued, starting up—"now am I called upon, as if by the voice of Heaven itself, to become the minister of justice!"

"Before this moment," continued Stokes-

bury, pretending not to have heard the last words, "I kept from you all avowal of a determination to which I had come, even before we had begun to speak—Now, however, I deliberately ask you—does not the double traitor — the treble, the ten-fold traitor, and villain—deserve, at my hands, what earthly law refuses to mete out to him—namely, punishment?"

"Why ask me such useless questions?—Had you but listened to me, I have already answered you."

"Perhaps I might have returned to the better-loved land of my adoption, without deciding upon such a blow, had not the wrongs committed upon my son, roused up, and added new rancour to those perpetuated upon myself;—had not I found that the villain who poisoned the source of my life's stream—not contented with that,—flung new infection into its current!—and shall he a second time escape me?—I ask

you again, does not Connor Kennedy merit punishment?"

"Have some compassion on me! Do not lacerate me so! Connor Kennedy *shall* be punished."

"He shall, by Heaven!—this very night, boy! Within this very hour, perhaps, I will avenge you! you and myself,—upon the closely-coiled, the fully-gorged, and the self-secure reptile! Await me here—all my measures are arranged;—you are already an object of the scrutiny of their laws;—in a very short time so shall I be also;—when I return, be prepared to accompany me at the instant, towards a remote and safe place of refuge."

"Psha, father! Do not touch those pistols on the table!"

"And why not?—They are my doomed instruments of——punishment on Connor Kennedy."

"No—no! For that purpose—that holy purpose, they are mine!—No other living

you:—the fellow knows not, indeed, my intention in visiting his master's premises; but no matter about that; listen to me, I say, and observe me well—three knocks at the hall-door; and thus—thus—and thus—" and the speaker, with the back knuckles of his hand, accompanied each "thus," with a stroke upon the hollow wainstcoating of the room, which produced a sound that curdled, while it still maddened, the young man's blood.

"Yes! yes! and now the pistols—give me both."

"One will be sufficient! I have prepared them with my own hands, and can assure you, therefore, that either one or the other may be depended upon."

"I require both, I say!—Aye—now I am properly armed;—fare you well;—you are the father of a wretched, wretched son—the blighted stem of a blighted scion! But let me take your hand—Fare you well—you shall be revenged—Yes!—along with *her*, and with me, you shall be revenged!"

The boy desperately grasped the hand which was bluffly extended to him;—his hot red eye shed no tear over the separation which he doomed should be final;—and then, hiding the pistols in a hurried manner, he rushed bare-headed and panting, into the street.

And Harry Stokesbury, while returning his parting salutation, as he looked intently and studiously into the expression of that eye, became satisfied that he had wrought upon the lad sufficiently to ensure the dreadful consummation after which he had long thirsted and ravened.

CHAPTER VI.

THE same evening, the Mayor of Wind-gap, with Shawn Leeach, and Gregory Roche, were seated together in regular council.

His worship sat in the middle of his usual council-hall—namely, the earthen-floored, but tidily arranged kitchen, of his thatched house, in his municipal wicker chair. The three had for some time been very serious, and still were so; exhibiting, in fact, the faces of gravity, and the decorous manners particularly characteristic of them, when on-

gaged upon matters of great public importance.

Their conversation is taken up, at the moment most convenient for our purpose, and for the reader's leisure.

"You're very ould, Shawn Leeach; the winther's snow is heavy on your head; and yet your head is fast on your neck for all that, Shawn; don't I spake a thruth?" demanded the Mayor, "very wisely."

"Mayor of Wind-gap, you do. Five-score-and-five-years, I have been on this earth—and that is a long age, praise to my Maker; and ould age brings the snowy head—spring comes to the fields, and to the threes, and the flowers of the fields, afther the winther; but there's no spring for the ould man; none in this world, at laste; if he hopes for that, his hope must be fixed in heaven. Yes—Mayor of Wind-gap, I am very ould, as you say, but my ould head is still on my shouldhers."

"Well, Shawn; as thrue as *that* is thrue,

and I repeat it over again, to ye both—Harry Stokesbury that was, and the sthrange Man now living at the Inch house, makes only one man between them."

"The death of a happy christhin be my lot, Mayor of Wind-gap, but that is news to make people wondher," observed Shawn Leeach.

"Och! well did I know him, when he was in his youth," remarked Gregory Roche —"but though my eyes—I give glory for the same—are as good to see with, now, as the day I got them, never would they find out the ruddy-cheeked and the handsome Harry Stokesbury, in that dark, wicked-looking man, that stood in the light of the bonfire last St. John's eve."

"And for all that, Gregory," resumed Maurteen Maher, "and you may take my word for it, I say to you over again—the man that you saw standin' in the light of the fire, that night, was the same Harry Stokesbury you knew in his young days."

"It is seldom I knew you to be far astray, Mayor of Wind-gap, an' so its asy for me to give you my b'lief in what you say, at present. It was not for having a stupid head the neighbours made you Mayor over them; only, I'm thinkin', ye had some help, besides your own eyes, in making out a likeness between Harry Stokesbury, and the sthrange Man of the Inch."

"And you, yourself, spakes now like a man that had his wits to the good, Gregory Roche," replied the Mayor. "Yes! by my own honest thruth, it would be a keen eye would know the young sapling of former days, out of the present ould oak of the Inch;—and so I *had* help, along with my own eyes, Gregory;—and I am goin' to tell you all about it—you and Shawn Leeach together; and mind ye, both, now ye are sittin' here, at the one side and the other o' me, that we may all hould a thrue council; and ye may know all that I know; and

that I may have your advice on the head of the whole of it; because we'll have to put our shouldhers to the business, in regular coorse."

"We'll each do our endavour, plaze the Lord!" said Shawn Leeach, solemnly.

"And ye know, moreover, that 'tis our ould way that what we spake to each other, when we sit in council, must not go from mouth to ear; for if t'was a thing that we shared our knowledge among all the world, mostha! there wouldn't be half money's worth in it; when apples are bending the boughs in every orchard, sure they are not bought up half as greedy as when there is only two for a half-penny; and more be token, I wouldn't talk to men, wid an ould woman's gaddin' tongue; and ould women, we all know, must get nothing at all to tell, if you'd have the hearth swept."

"What you're sayin' shews the sense God gave ye," flattered Shawn Leeach.

"Mayor of Wind-gap," quoth Gregory

Roche, more pithily, "a silent tongue doesn't shame the owner; and sure, if every one was as wise as ourselves, there would be a mayor in every house on Wind-gap hill; and then we might go wid our judgments out o' the place; and lave nothin' behind us but constructions, and law,—instead of bein' good neighbours to each other, undher God—and us."

"'Tis plain," resumed Maurteen, "that ye are both the sort I took you for, when I made ye my council: and so, I'll be open-hearted wid ye. Ye want to learn how I found out that the sthrange Man of the Inch was Harry Stokesbury. Well. Have ye the memory of a poor *colleen*, a sisther o' mine, that lived among us, and was merry among us, twenty years ago?"

"Its right well I bring her to my mind—poor Kate Maher!" answered Shawn Leeach.

"And 'tis, have *I* the memory of her, you want to know, Mayor of Wind-gap?"

asked Gregory Roche; "achone! and its sure that I have. Kate Maher was worthy for a prence to look upon: tall an' comely, she was, in her shapes; an' her cheek plump, an' smooth, an' red, like the bloom on the apple; an' her eyes was the blue sky of a May mornin'; and her hair was the shinin' goold; *arrah*, yes; there wasn't your fellow, Kate Maher, on the hill o' Wind-gap."

"It's often, before now, her own ears heard your flatthering speeches of her, Gregory Roche; and well would it have been for her, twenty years ago, if she gave heed to them, only half as often as she heard them. Well. The neighbours never knew what happened to Kate Maher, or why she went away from us; and in thruth, ye are both going to hear her story, for the first time that it ever came out of my lips.

"Young Harry Stokesbury took our poor Kate's heart; and, to my sore sorrow, she wasn't honester for knowin' him; and when

he was sent across the says, she went into the same ship with Harry Stokesbury, in a sailor boy's dhress, all for the love of him; yes, Mayor's council; she left kith and kin, hearth-stone, and home counthry, for his sinful sake."

"Well, neighbours; the ship was smashed into little bits—just as a body would break a nut-shell—upon the rocky shores of a sthrange counthry, a great way off from Wind-gap. And Harry Stokesbury was the only mankind that lived out of the wrack; all the rest of the men that were in the ship—and a fine, great, big, ship it was—sunk to the bottom o' the say, and its wathers roared over them. And my poor Kate was the only woman-kind saved at the same time; and it was Harry Stokesbury that saved her; and many others, may be, man and woman, he might have thried to save—for as ye all know, he was the best swimmer we ever seen, on breast or back, in the river that runs undher our

feet; stay out in it, he used to do, like one of its own fishes—only that he just kept his chin above the wather—for hours together; and then dart back to the bank where he left his clothes, and jump up on it, as if he had been only takin' a little walk in my little garden, where I keep the osiers growing, for my basket thrade, and sometimes for my chair thrade.

"And so, he only saved but the one; and that one was the poor creature that left her counthry for him; my poor, misfortunate, and only sisther, Kate Maher. And long did he fight wid the terrible waves o' the angry say, and he would not go from death, without her; until at last his feet touched the shores o' the sthrange counthry, and she, senseless, in his arums.

"From that time to the present time, the most befitting thing for me to say is that poor Kate Maher never left the man that wouldn't care about his own life, until he had saved hers; though it grieves me sore

to tell ye that many, and many, a time, since that day, she got good cause to quit him.

"Avoch, neighbours! Ye have heard everybody talkin' of an unfortunate ould woman, that keeps house for him at the Inch; and sore it goes against my heart to say that that woman—withered before her time— though, as ye both know, not yet as ould as the people call her—is my poor sisther. And so, now ye can give a guess how I got my knowledge of who the Sthrange Man is, and, more be token, of some of his doin's since he came to live near us, for the second time in his life."

"'Tis mighty wondherful to harken to the words o' your mouth; mighty wondherful, in good thruth, Maurteen Maher," said old Shawn Leeach, sitting more upright, and looking more vivacious, than for many years had been his expression. Tears were in his eyes, too.

"Achone! its often I sarched out tidin's

o' my poor Kate, afore this blessed hour," groaned Gregory Roche;—bud you held the silent tongue, Mayor o' Wind-gap;—and its heart-sorry for her I am this day;—Och!—if she had only lived among us 'till the prasant time, in the wholesome air that comes up here from the river, she would have no wrinkle in her face—for my poor Kate Maher is not yet an ould woman."

"No, Gregory, as I tould you afore;—but a sthrange coorse o' life, and a life of sin and hardship, and the airly thoughts of her youth—for she was bred up to love and sarve God—stalin' like the blight of the unwholesome wind upon her—made Kate Maher what she is, before her time;—yes;—made her comb a gray head, afore another girl of her years would have a white hair in it, to tell of the comin' winther;—so that her cheek was shrivelled up by the woe of her sperit;—Och! neighbours, neighbours, she has tould me herself not to wondher at the wrinkles of her face; for that the con-

stant cryin' from her eyes would wear channels into the hardest marble;" — the voice of the stoical Mayor of Wind-gap trembled;—nor were his council uninfected by his feelings.

"The Lord forgive her, and bring her to a thrue sinse of her sins," said old Shawn Leeach.

"The Lord pity her, and be her comfort," ejaculated the more sympathizing Gregory Roche.

"Neighbours, I am afther telling ye what I would not tell, and what I never will tell to another livin' crathure. Our poor Kate must now go to her grave without the world's knowledge that she is alive here among us. All I can now thry to do for my sisther, is to take her quietly away from the man that has made her what she is;—that's one o' the things I want your help in. And so listen—We must do our endayvours to get her free with Harry Stokesbury's own good will;—for if he had a notion that she

tould the secrets of her life, her death-doom was given. And I intend, neighbours, to get something for her to live on, while she is on this earth, repenting of her sins, and prayin' for mercy;—and I have the plan in my mind how to do this, aye, and another thing at the same time, if the Lord gives us his help."

"It will be a work of charity, and He will assist us," said Shawn Leeach.

"In Him we put our thrust.—Well, neighbours, I have more to tell ye.

"The name of the counthry isn't in my mind where Harry Stokesbury brought Kate Maher out of the say;—but there is people far away from us that never earn an honest mouthful of food, from the beginning of the year to the year's ending.—And they have ships;—and they sail out in them upon the say;—and they meet other ships full of marchendizes of all sorts and loaded with chests of money;—and they fight with those ships;—and they conquer them;—and they

shed the blood of the christians they find in them;—and they make their own of all the riches;—and there is nothing terrible that these robbers of the say don't do. And now, mind me well. It was among these wicked people that Harry Stokesbury landed out of the wrack with Kate Maher.—And Harry soon began to love and like their ways;—and as he was a bould and a brave man, he soon made himself captain of a robbin' ship. And then poor Kate was soon overlooked by him;—he took up with fine ladies;—and she was only his sarvant; but still she worked with a good heart for the man she loved dearly, and that saved her, at the risk of his own life, from a winding sheet o' the salt say-wather—neighbours, she did."

"The Lord look down upon us, and purtect us!" prayed Gregory Roche in consternation.

"Ye have the knowledge, Mayor's council, of what Harry Stokesbury did, that

brought banishment upon him; but there is more to be said on that score;—and only three people in the world can tell ye what the more is;—and I am one of the three.

"A little while before Connor Kennedy lost his wife, she brought a male-child into the world;—and she was not well of her lying-in, when her husband was half-killed at her bed-side—and 'twas that sent herself to her arly grave—Connor Kennedy and she did not wish that any one should be the wiser of her marriage;—they were afraid of Harry Stokesbury;—and they thought to hide it, in hopes of getting his good will, before any one could tell him of it:—and for that rason they sent away the child as soon as it saw the light. And that child was forced off from its nurse, and no one can tell of the fate of the crature, to this day, barrin' the three people I spoke to ye of before;—but, neighbours, the child was sazed on by Harry Stokesbury;—and it is a man at the present time, alive; and more

betoken, a comely gorsoon to look upon;—an' the two o' ye that I'm talkin' to have often seen him, face to face, an' are mightily plazed wid his looks;—and more than once, I heard Gregory Roche say,"—Here Gregory started, and looked confounded—"that he was as brave a boy as ever he liked to see, comin' up from the town below, to Wind-gap Hill;—Gregory Roche, don't I spake the thruth to ye?—answer me like a christhin."

"The Heavens be my bed," answered Gregory Roche, making the sign of the Cross on his forehead—"if I can call to mind who or what you mane at all, Mayor of Wind-gap."

"I am five-score years, and some more years on the back of them, living on Wind-gap Hill, where strange people goes to and fro and sthrange things are hard of; but the likes o' this never came across me before," said Shawn Lecach.

"You might thravel a long summer's day, Shawn, and you would not find one to

know what the Mayhor knows," adulated Gregory Roche.

"And I know more, still, neighbours;—I know Connor Kennedy's boy—aye—I know him, to spake to him;—and I know where he is while we are discoursen' about him;"—and the Mayor paused, as if waiting for a new flattering comment; but his two old counsellors were too intent with their ears to use their tongues;—he was, therefore, obliged to go on.

"Shawn Leeach, and Gregory Roche—as sure as ye are both sittin' here, this is the thruth;—Connor Kennedy's son goes by the name of George Blundell."

"Why, the Lord be good to us!—And isn't id thrue, at the same time, then, that the father has the son in gaol, and that he'll hang him on the gallows-hill, over there?"—and Gregory pointed to a sudden conical elevation of ground on the opposite side of the river, then the honored place of execution.— "An' if Connor Kennedy is that

boy's father, didn't the son break into the father's house, and take away his own sisther!—For you know, Mayor of Wind-gap, the people say that the young girl livin' with Connor Kennedy is his daughther;—and then, won't the brother have to answer for the sisther's shame?—And won't the father have to answer for the death o' the son?"

"I tould ye, Mayor's council, that the first thing you're to give your advice in is the freein' of unfortunate Kate Maher from Harry Stokesbury, with his own free will;—and now I tell ye that the other thing ye have to do is to give your counsel how we are to keep the father from hangin' of his own son."

"Mayor of Wind-gap," said Shawn Leeach, impressively, "won't you go to Connor Kennedy and tell him his son is livin'; and that the boy in the gaol is that son?—won't you, this moment?"

"And if I did, Shawn, Connor Kennedy

would have only my word for the thruth o' the sayin'; and, on account of all we have to do, that would never be enough. There is only the one man on the face o' the arth can prove—prove it, I mane, beyond all doubt—that George Blundell is Connor Kennedy's son——and that man is Harry Stokesbury."

"And, Mayor o' Wind-gap," demanded Gregory Roche, imploringly,—"Has the brother to stand afore the judgment-sate, to give an account o' the poor young sisther?"

"Gregory Roche, I am goin' to make answer to you, in a way that will put the wondher on you, more than any word ye have yet hard me spake.—The brother had nothing to do with takin' away the sisther; but the father had all to do with takin' away the daughter."

"Ulla-loo!" ejaculated Gregory, "one sayin' o' yours bates the other, out-an'-out; will you make known to me this, then?—

Didn't Connor Kennedy put the boy in gaol for doin' what he never done, but what the wicked father o' the young *calleen* made come to pass with his own hands?"

"Mind me, again, Gregory. The wicked father o' the young *calleen* took her away, of a sartainty; but not Connor Kennedy:—*he* had no more to do with it than poor young George Blundell had."

And, interrupting his council in expressions of a climax of their astonishment, Maurteen Maher added—"and it was Harry Stokesbury forced her away;—and as sure as George Blundell is Connor Kennedy's son, Anny Kennedy is Harry Stokesbury's daughther!"

Here the feelings of the listeners became too deep for any thing but vague mutterings; till at length Shawn Leeach asked—"*Chrossa-Christha* about us!—and did the wicked villain o' the arth know who was in his hands, the night he took Anny Kennedy from her home?"

"No, Shawn; no more than Gregory Roche knew it; and I b'lieve Gregory won't purtend to much knowledge on the matther. But, listen to me, still, neighbours, and thry if I can't give ye some insight.

"From the day and hour that Harry Stokesbury was banished from his counthry, up to this blessed moment, he never forgave Connor Kennedy; and 'tis my thought of him, that he'd turn the world inside-out—aye, sell himself, sowl and body to some one we won't make mention of—to do his cousin an evil; and so, thinkin' like yourself and the rest o' the people, Gregory, that Anny Kennedy was his daughther, wicked Harry ran off with her, to spite the man he thought was her father."

"Oh, *beeha baugha*,* Mayor of Wind-gap!" cried Shawn Leeach, his snowy head shaking to extremity—"and did the misfortunate man bring the disgrace on

* Virgin Mother.

his own child? Achone! did that come to pass so near to Wind-gap hill?"

"No, Shawn Leeach; he learned who she was in time:" answered the Mayor consequentially, and to a nice observer egotistically.

"Then, may the heavens be blest, this night! for if such a thing had happened, wouldn't it be enough to bring down upon the earth the angry fire from Heaven, and to make the innocent suffer with the guilty?"

"Who was the blessed christhen that sthretched out his hand, in time?" demanded Gregory Roche, see-sawing his body in deep sympathy.

"It was myself that was able, undher the Lord's mercy, to do the good deed, Gregory."

"Och! the blessin's light upon you! an' I wouldn't doubt you, Mayor o' Wind-gap."

"Well, neighbours. But there is one

thing that I am asthray upon. By help o' the poor Kate Maher, I was able to dive to the bottom of a great many of Harry Stokesbury's doins'; but 'tis beyand her knowing, and, by coorse, beyand my knowing, what he has in his head, by conthrivin' to make the father, Conner Kennedy, put the son, George Blundell, in gaol. For, ye must know, it was Harry Stokesbury that got Donnelly to swear against the poor young boy; Donnelly—the greatest rapparee unhanged this night; he'd rob the althar for money; and it was threachery that he was put into Connor Kennedy's house."

"And so, Maurteen Maher, we are to give you our counsel upon the point, why the wicked man o' the Inch has got Connor Kennedy to let George Blundell be sent to the common gaol?"

"Yes; and, first, here is my own notion about it. As I tould ye afore, Stokesbury 'ud go to the thrashold o' the bottomless

pit, if not farther, to have one good, heavy blow at Connor Kennedy; and I was thinkin' in my own mind, that to make his cousin's ould age come on before its time, and to send him despairing to the grave, he wants—since he has found out that Anny Kennedy is not Connor's child, and that he cannot for the same rason, wrake his hathred upon her—he wants, I say, to make the father an insthrument in takin' away the son's life; and then he'll come to Kennedy, and say to him—'Look now, at that sthrangled corpse—and look at it well—for 'tis the corpse o' your own boy! And, in this manner, cousin Kennedy, I have a little revenge on you; in this manner I pay you part of what I have owed you these twenty long years, for robbing me of my fortune, of my father's love, and of my bethrothed wife!'"

The Mayor's council shuddered, and prayed that all good christians might be

kept out of the power of a man capable of such unimaginable villany.

"Shawn Leeach, and Gregory Roche, this work of darkness we must gainsay, if heaven vouchsafes to give us the wisdom, and the patience, and the manes to do it."

Solemnly, and with zealous protestations, his Worship's compeers expressed their anxiety to aid and abet him to the utmost of their ability; "And," added Shawn Leeach, "our humble prayers will help you too, morning and evening, Maurteen Maher."

"And I will go on my knees, and pray, too," continued the Mayor; "but," and his manner became impressive and alarming—"still I have a fear that we must fail in our endeavours. And, first, the fear came from my being in the dark, as to Stokesbury's raal intentions in regard o' the young George; and now I have the fear that we are to fail, by rason o' the doom that is on the poor boy. A thought comes heavy and

black into my mind, that death is afore him, and that he must face it. Shawn Leeach, give me the words of your age, upon what I will ask you. When the first son of a marriage comes into the world on a Whit-sunday mornin', afore the day dawns in the sky—isn't there a doom upon that son?"

Daddy Leeach answered, in all the slow sententionsness of oracular exposition, his eyes solemnly fixed on the ground:

"Mayor of Wind-gap, there is a doom, a woeful doom upon the first son of a marriage that is born of a Whit-sunday mornin' afore the day breaks, to give him a welcome. During my stay in this wicked world, the doom came to pass three times, to my own certain knowledge."

"And ochone, ochone! what is the doom, Shawn Leeach?" asked Gregory Roche.

"This is the doom, Gregory. When that son comes to his twenty-first year, he will kill a fellow-creature, or some fellow-

creature's hand will kill him; aye surely, surely; blood he is to shed, or else his own must be shed."

"Then, Shawn Leeach, I tell you that Gerrald Kennedy, for that is the name he got at his christinin', the first son, afther his parent's marriage, was born into the world of a Whit-sunday morning, afore the dawn broke up the clouds o' the night; and, moreover, that his twenty-first year is on his young head."

"The Lord have a care of him, since such is his case!" prayed Daddy Leeach.

"Och, an' amin'," said Gregory; "and, Mayor o' Wind-gap, won't it, oh, won't it be a frightful thing if his own father's hand is to bring down the doom on young George Blundell? Is'nt it in your power to save him? or in the power of us all, or of any one?"

"Gregory Roche, I have the dhread that 'tis out of our power to save him; we want to go to work in a very conthrary business,

and, as yet, we do not see a stim of our way afore us. I tould ye, a while ago, that t'would be of no use for me to go to Connor Kenndey, and tell who George Blundell is; without proofs, and good ones, too, he would laugh at ould Maurteen Maher, and no blame to him. I said to ye, at the same time, that Harry Stokesbury is the only livin' man who can give us the kind of proof we want; but how we are to make him do that, is the question. And yet, along with getting poor Kate Maher out of his divels clutches, of his own free will, with freedom for her to end her days in her own counthry, repenting of her sins — we must conthrive to make him do it, neighbours; or, if we don't, no other three heads on Wind-gap hill—not to talk o' the town below — will carry the point. But, now, Mayor's council, let us each go to bed, and sleep on it. To-morrow may bring us wisdom."

CHAPTER VII.

It is not, we hope, forgotten, that the council held by the wise men of Wind-gap took place on the evening when George Blundell, or, more properly, Gerald Kennedy, escaped from prison, and conferred with Harry Stokesbury. It now further appears that Maurteen Maher's sagacity was at fault, as to Stokesbury's designs upon the youth; that, in fact, his little birdeen, in other words, his sister, had failed to fathom the desperate man's present purpose; nay, it is also apparent that, about the time

when the three sages, puzzled by the business in hand, agreed to "sleep on it," in the hope of getting up more enlightened the next morning, Gerald Kennedy had already set out on his road to the destruction from which they were anxious to save him;—to the accomplishment of that doom, indeed, predicated by Daddy Leeach for a man in his twenty-first year, and unfortunately born under the peculiar circumstances which attended Gerald's birth.

Stokesbury, upon the lad's sudden and agitated departure from the house in which they held their last conversation, prepared to follow him, to dog his steps, and keep an eye upon his motions and actions. But it happened to become most necessary for him to hold in his possession, before he and Gerald should again meet, the proofs of his young victim's parentage; and to get at these he was obliged to visit the house at the Inch; and thus some time unavoidably elapsed, ere he could proceed to ascertain

the result of his diabolical scheme of vengeance.

At length, he stood at the door of Connor Kennedy's dwelling. He listened. All seemed still and peaceable within.

"Has his heart failed him, and has he not come hither at all? or has he *done it*, and have they again lodged him in their gaol? or, has he used the second pistol, and does the roof of this silent house cover two corpses,—one of them his own?" In this manner did Harry Stokesbury commune with himself for a few moments.

Then he gave three low knocks at the door, and again listened. No one replied to his signal. He repeated it. The door still remained closed. Muttering curses against Donnelly for his lack of attention, he knocked louder and more boldly. Suddenly he started, and his figure became rigidly fixed in a position of deep and stern attention. The sharp report of a pistol-shot was heard within, reverberating to a

double compass, as it rang through the apartments of the house.

"There! he *has* used *one* of the pistols, at least," pursued the listener.

The door was suddenly pulled open;—old Joseph Fitzgerald was rushing past him into the dark and silent street.

"Stop!" cried Stokesbury, "what is the meaning of that shot in your house?"

"Oh, sir! whoever you are," answered the servant, "for heaven's sake, give christian help to secure the man that has murthered my masther in his sleep!"

"Murdered your master! and is the murderer known to you?"

"Yes, yes, sir! a young man that escaped from the common gaol this evening; his name is George Blundell."

"Aye, indeed? lead the way, then, I will secure him for you."

The white-headed servant preceded his supposed assistant up stairs, and into the drawing-room. A single chamber-light

flickered upon the table, and Gerald Kennedy was seated close to it, his elbow resting on the table, and his forehead pressing on his hand. There was one pistol lying near the candle, and another in the hand that hung at length by his chair.

"There is the murtherer," said Joseph Fitzgerald; and then, turning his regard on Stokesbury, he started back, when, in his person he recognized the strange Man of the Inch, and was about to retire from the room, muttering inaudibly.

"Stand your ground, man; I require your presence," said Stokesbury, intercepting him, locking the door, and putting the key in his pocket.

The bravo next advanced slowly to Gerald Kennedy, laid his hand on his shoulder, and shook him quietly.

The youth raised his head, and looked into his friend's face.

"Well?" asked Stokesbury.

Gerald Kennedy made no answer.

"That shot?" continued Stokesbury; "the old servant tells me it was you who fired it."

"He tells you the fact," at last, replied Gerald, in a low, hoarse whisper.

"And from this pistol it was discharged?" pursued the strange Man of the Inch, taking up that which lay on the table, near the young man's elbow.

"Yes; from that pistol the shot was discharged."

Stokesbury studiously examined the weapon, with a view to ascertain if it had been recently exploded, and soon seemed satisfied of the fact. Gerald saw him smile.

"You did not want the second?" he asked.

"No: I had, indeed, intended this one in my hand for another purpose; but I change my mind now;—the courageous midnight murderer should abide the consequences of his act;"—and Gerald Kennedy flung far

from him the pistol he had hitherto held in his right hand.

Stokesbury re-approached the old servant, and spoke to him in a low tone.

"He was asleep, I think you said, when this young ruffian murdered him?"

"Asleep in his bed," answered Joseph Fitzgerald; "my poor master got no time to pray for mercy on his soul."

"So; so:—but are you sure there are no hopes of him? Are you sure he is dead, quite dead?"

"Oh! to my sorrow I am;—dead, dead he is; aye, and could, could, by this time."

"Let me see the body."

"I will, sir;" but won't you first make sure o' the prisoner for us?"

"Ha, you are right; yes: before any thing else, I have to bring him to an account."

So saying, Harry Stokesbury again came close to Gerald Kennedy.

"Young man," he demanded, "don't

you feel quieter now? quieter, I mean, than when we last spake together?"

"Tell me what you really mean," said Gerald.

"Why, you know you have killed him; and are you not, therefore, satisfied?"

"And are not you, as well as I?"

"Listen to me. I am going to tell you something. If you happen to feel really concerned for the little act you have committed, I can comfort you. It was out of your power to have avoided something of the kind, even if you would have done so; you have but fulfilled a fate assigned to you, at your birth; before it, for aught I know."

Gerald Kennedy here stood up, and gazed steadfastly at his tormentor.

"I do not understand you," he said.

"Why, boy, the case is even thus: while you were but an infant, a small mass of creeping flesh, more helpless and more contemptible than the worm; in fact, when you

were but a few days old, I was wisely informed that, because you happened to be whelped upon a particular day, the which day, as it seemeth good to Providence, is to prove a curse to all male brats born within a certain number of its hours; — for this reason, I say, I was sagely, credibly told, that you had been doomed, upon attaining your twenty-first year, either to shed blood, or to have your own blood shed. Therefore, my lad, do not blame yourself for what you have done to-night; blame your stars, rather, which allowed you to be introduced among us, in this world, at a forbidden moment."

"There is something in your mode of speech, and in your accents, and in your look, at present, that chills me," said Gerald Kennedy; "it seems as if you would now sneer at me for doing that which you certainly set me on to do."

"Not at all, not at all; you only mistake. I merely want to reconcile you to

yourself. For is it not quite plain to you, that, when the doing of a murder, when the sluicing of human blood, had been assigned to you, by fate, or by whatever else you choose to call your Lord high Admiral aloft, you could not possibly do otherwise, than obey orders and work ship? Well, this being allowed, I now have to demand your thanks for having set you on, as you say. Remember, I had a good look-out for your personal safety, boy, after you should have fulfilled your doom by blowing out the brains of the man we used to call Mr. Connor Kennedy; this very night, in fact, if you and I continue of a mind, I can snatch you, as I before hinted, out of all reach of their bother, on the head of what you have done; and surely you now comprehend why you should thank me, do you not?"

Gerald replied, with some reason, that he did not, even yet, distinctly understand.

"Look you then, had I left you to take your own chance, in working out that ter-

rible doom that was upon you, ten to one, but yours might have been the life lost, instead of another man's; ten to one, again, but the odds might have been against you, in an encounter with a different kind of person. In Mr. Connor Kennedy I took care, however, to provide for you a man whom you could kill, without much danger of being killed by him;—and, then, as to the time and circumstances of the murder, you are still fortunate; the poor man was asleep;—his head resting comfortably upon his pillow, when you put one of my little pistols to it;—weak as was the worm, he might have turned upon you, had he been awake, you know;—and does all this shew no fatherly care of you, boy?"

"It is popularly credited," said Gerald Kennedy, "that your human shape is but an outward semblance, and that a devil of darkness possesses, animates, and governs it, and I am now inclined to adopt that belief; for ever thus, it is said, does the ene-

my of man, with wily wisdom, lead his dupe into crime, and then mocks at the wretch for having fallen."

"What! give me hard words, only for my watchfulness over your precious life? out upon you, for an ungrateful boy; yes, ungrateful you are; and there is but one other sin more heinous than ingratitude, and that one is murder; cool murder, I mean; stealthy, cowardly, midnight murder!"

"Oh! how terrible is all this!" exclaimed Gerald.

"The last time you and I laid our heads together, I told you, that when I had left Connor Kennedy trampled down on my own hearth-stone, I thought my full revenge was wreaked upon him, but that he, even in this, deceived me; nay, more, that instead of ensuring my own triumphant vengeance that night, the villain was still able to wreathe his coils closer and closer around me;—was still able to crush and sting, till

he made the remainder of my life but one long, writhing fit of shame and degradation. Well, you, good youth, had previously been placed by me, as an infant, where I could find you when I had leisure;—find you, to bring you up for any purpose, which, on reflection, should appear best to me. Well, I say, after the sentence which sent me, branded like Cain, into a strange country, I felt, whenever the recollection of your existence occurred to me, that a revenge, at last, by my own hand, upon the author of all my ruin, would not, whenever I might be able to achieve it, be half enough;—but that your hand, aye, yours only, must, from that moment, be appointed and directed to right me.—And such, at last, turns out to be the case;—and, at last, I *am* righted."

"It was a fell and baleful idea and plan," said Gerald; "and why should I,—I, your son, have been selected for effecting it? And how can my hand have avenged

you better than your own could have done ?"

"My son !—but I will answer you in my own way, and yet quite to your satisfaction, I have no doubt. Hearken to me. I have been, and I am, a bold and a courageous man. With my single arm often have I overpowered heavy odds ; but that was in fair fighting, always excepting my wish to trample, to buffet, aye, to kick to death, the dastard Connor Kennedy, never have I taken a life in cold blood ;—never have I thought of so taking one. *My* enemies were met front to front, and battle roared around us ; I pushed my full breast against them ; we encountered on the compact of the valiant ; 'Search for my heart with your sword, if your arm be stronger, or your blow surer, than mine !' no ! the poor dog that crouched and crawled for mercy, never could I smite ; but I have ever left him, mark you, to be dealt upon by meaner

hands than mine own! and in proportion to my manly disgust of a mean assassination, are my dislike and contempt of the mean assassin. Yes, the skulking, cowardly, midnight murderer I do detest;—with him I can hold no intercourse; and him I do repudiate; for in his base veins there could never have run a drop of the lion's blood that courses through mine!"

"Father, what mean you?"

"Father! reptile, spawn, poltroon, man-killer! you are, in truth, no son of mine. I lied to the teeth, when I said you were; but I lied boldly, and for my purpose, as I also did on sundry other points, with you. For instance, I told you that Kennedy had plotted against you, and then I lied: and that he had suborned Donnelly against you, and then I lied, too: and, listen to me with your soul, that he had seduced your Anny from you, and that he had injured her, and that, at last, he had married her; and again, and again, and again, and on, on to the end

of the chapter, I lied, and lied, and lied. Why? ha, ha! why? to madden you into the mood for doing what you have so nobly done! to make sure of your killing Connor Kennedy! to make sure, quite sure, of his death by your hand! by his own son's hand! Aye, at that you will gape at me; but, just as true as that you are no son of mine, it is true that you *are* the son of the man whose blood is upon you! and whose grovelling, traitor-blood gave life to your heart, fitly timing its pulses for such a good action; for, as I told you before, blood of mine could never have warmed you, or, rather, cooled you down to the perpetration of such a mean atrocity."

"Now, I do not believe you," said Gerald.

"Sirrah! not believe me?"

"No, I do not believe you; I am not Connor Kennedy's son: 'tis a fiendish fiction: 'tis an impossibility, an utter impossibility."

"And what, particularly, makes you so very incredulous?" sneered Stokesbury.

"Because I feel convinced that you, even you, devil as you are, never could conceive the thought of setting on the son to kill the father. You dare not; heaven would not suffer you to do so. I say again, I do not believe you; I say again, I am not Connor Kennedy's son."

"You have spoken well, boy, passing well. There is pith in your words; and your view of right and wrong is very correct; yes, I do myself declare it is a black and ugly deed to murder a father! and yet that deed you have done."

"I have not; for *you* live; and you are my father; you have brought me up as your offspring; you have given me the title of son, and that title I will uphold, even against yourself, before the world."

"Pish—I can easily disprove your title."

"And I dare you to that disproof!"

"Fool! and do you think I cannot make my words good?—Do you think me so very poor an artificer as that my patient work of nearly twenty years is likely to be blown down by a puff of your flimsy breath?—Silly cur!—I had anticipated your present attempt to palm yourself upon me, even before I entered this house to-night. And now, to begin my course of proof."

He took off the handkerchief which usually half-covered his face, and continued,

"Joseph Fitzgerald, old and faithful servant of my father's house,—do you recollect your former master?"

"Oh, sir, sir," answered the man, "great wondher comes upon me with your words,—I don't know what reply to make you!"

"Time has, doubtless, changed me; the weather has pelted on me, and the sun has scorched me; you see before you, however, the master you have long thought dead. Go for your wife, and lead her hither directly."

"My wife, you said, sir!" repeated Joseph, looking more and more frightened.

"Yes, man—your wife—did I not speak distinctly?—Tell her that Harry Stokesbury summons her to speak with him. Tell her to remember the evening when young Harry Stokesbury forced Connor Kennedy's brat from her arms; tell her to remember that he then warned her she should be called upon, at a future day to identify the traitor's bantling;—and tell her that the time is now come. Retire, I say, and lead your wife up to this room."

He opened the door, and the servant withdrew. He went on, to Gerald—

"Yes, son of Connor Kennedy, I will soon demonstrate to you who is, or rather who was your father, and, how full, and how true, has, therefore, been my revenge. In one point, alone, I have not quite satisfied myself.—Before the very last gasp left his body, he did not know who killed him; oh!—would that he could have known it!

And, trust me, often and often have I pondered to try and arrange that he should be made acquainted with the relationship between him and his executioner. But it was impossible to compass it, without putting both of you on your guard. And when you lay in yonder gaol, too, by my contrivance, another mode of vengeance on him slightly occurred to me. For a moment I thought it might be practicable to change my tactics; to get you tried, convicted, and excellently well hanged for the abduction of Anny Kennedy, making him a witness against you;—and then, after your popular exit from this world, I would have just whispered to him the story of your parentage.—But my chief witness, Donnelly, I could not depend upon, at the push; he was what you call a person of bad character, and, besides, any man's servant, either in truth or in falsehood, for the heaviest bribe;—indeed, you have yourself heard him admit as much, a few hours ago. But no matter. Although

Connor Kennedy could not, lest our plan might fail, get a hint in this world of who it was I doomed to take his life, yet, as very good people say there is another world, perhaps he knows it now;—and, indeed, for the especial consolation of my heart, never, before this hour have I felt half so inclined to be a firm believer on that knotty subject."

Joseph Fitzgerald re-entered, conducting his wife, both agitated and trembling to excess.

"I am tould," began the woman, "there is one here who says he is the Masther Harry Stokesbury?"

"Come hither, dame.—You nursed for a few days Connor Kennedy's and Mary Bryan's first and only son?" The servant assented.

"You have received the message I sent to you this moment by your husband?—and you have understood it?"—She again answered affirmatively.

"Well. Examine these things atten-

tively."—He took a small box from his bosom, opened it, and placed it on the table. "Have you seen them before? Are these the rags in which your own hands clothed Connor Kennedy's son, before you took him to nurse at your house? And do you find upon them the marks which I, Harry Stokesbury, directed you to put upon them, before I dragged your charge over your threshold?"

"Whether it comes to pass that you are Masther Harry Stokesbury or not," she replied, "these are the same clothes Connor Kennedy's son had on him, when Masther Harry Stokesbury took away the child from me."

"So;—and look at this too; can you call this little thing to mind?" he continued.

"Oh! mercy be to me! It is the gospel I hung round the infant's neck, to save him from his evil doom," answered the woman.

"Yes!" scoffed Stokesbury, close into Gerald's face,—"and thus I learned the

fable of your famous doom — the doom I have led you here to-night to accomplish, as I before told you—and learned it from this woman's lips, when by chance I asked the meaning of the silly amulet she had appended to your little carcase. Ha!—And you begin to admit my proofs, do you?—Yes; I see that horror is on your face;—I see that your cheek is livid; I see that a cold sweat trickles down your forehead, and that your limbs totter beneath you. But there is stronger proof of the true nature of the cowardly murder you have just committed. Attend, sirrah; attend, closely.—Woman!" he went on aloud, and now imperiously and passionately, "you will recollect that I ordered you to notice a something on the arm of Connor Kennedy's whelp?"

"May the Heavens save us!—and it is the same voice I now hear that said the same words to me more than twenty years ago!"

"Right—the same voice, the very same. But did I not order you to note that mark? And when you had done so, did you not call it a cherry-mark, caused, you would have me believe, from a cherry having been flung in play at his mother, before his birth? but no matter what you said—was there not a reddish spot of that kind on the young toad's arm?"

"I recollect every word you say, sir;—it is all as fresh to my mind as if it happened but yesterday."

"Examine your arm, then, Gerald Kennedy—and I call you at last by your true name;—I have, before now, allowed you to peer at *my* arm."

The unhappy young man suddenly sat down, as if from total incapacity to stand; placed his elbows on the table, and fully covered his face with his hands; and tears stole through his fingers, as in a weak and broken voice he said—"The mark is upon my arm."

"And my proof complete!" said Stokesbury; "and Connor Kennedy's murderer, *is* Connor Kennedy's son!—And that son knows as much!—Knows, too, that I set him on to kill his scoundrel parent—and why I did so!—Cur! you have named *me*—father—and the words came like the serpent's hiss into my ear; for, when you gave me that title, I called to mind that you were the offspring of my direst enemy—that you were of the loathed blood of him who duped, abused, robbed, plundered, branded, banished me! and who had wiled Mary Bryan from my arms!—Oh! spume of the old reptile!—but that I cherished you as my avenger, I could have struck you to my foot, and spurned you, and spat upon you, when you dared so to address me—Ha! but no matter!—From Connor Kennedy's own slime has crawled the younger adder to sting him to the death!—from the tissue of his own infernal plottings have I woven the

web of his ruin—insinuating into the middle of it the spider-spawn that was to clutch and strangle its bloated begetter!—Ha!—he taught me—he taught me!—Aye—and for this I brought you up, Gerald Kennedy! No one else, I say to you, again, could have been my executioner upon your father!—root and branch he withered me,—and root and branch I have withered him!—True—I bear his brand upon my arm, and his curse still deeper branded into my heart!—true—I walk through the world, a mere black shadow of man, cast from an identity, a person of man, that I dare not name or avow. All that is true!——But something is done, now, to reconcile me to my lot!—that loathsome villain's son has shed his blood at my will!—and, branded as I am, that son shall be as branded! The high gallows, to be sure, he may escape; for I suppose he will have friends in this little nook to back him! But even if he live, whenever he walks forth, the veriest heart-

rotten wretches in existence, and the most virtuous people—the veriest sinners, and the most innocent children—shall join in one cry against him—and that one cry shall be Parricide!"—

Gerald Kennedy, as if suddenly recovering his strength, sprung up from the position and attitude in which we have last described him; traces of tears still deep upon his cheek;—

"Dreadful man!" he said, "you have, indeed, drawn a terrific, and yet a true picture of the fate of a parricide; and, oh my God!" he continued, flinging himself upon his knees, straining his eyes, and stretching his arms upwards, while the tone of his voice was deep, fervent, and intense,—"Almighty Eye of the universe! behold before thee, an erring, and a humbled being! but accept, Omnipotent, the gratitude of a stricken, bursting heart, which gives thee praise and adoration, because that of parent's blood, or of the blood of any of Thy crea-

tures, I am guiltless—guiltless—guiltless!"

"What say you, worm,—guiltless?" cried Stokesbury, starting back.

Gerald Kennedy again stood firmly on his feet, and his person erected itself to the full of its lofty height; and now a flush of exultation overspread hi face, and his eye flashed a calm defiance, as with energy and grace he continued:

"Yes, guiltless of all taint of blood, I am; and not only guiltless of my father's blood, but standing here my father's protector against the universe! These arms to defend him, and this body as a tower of strength between him and myriads No, no; I care not if his enemy be man, or devil—his son is able to shield him from all harm."

He paused a moment, a little exhausted; and Harry Stokesbury only devoured him with his eye, but did not answer him.

"Stokesbury—Stokesbury,—you have shown but a slight knowledge of human

nature. Stokesbury, although double my age, you have shewn only that. Do you think, young, and strong, as I am, I could have submitted so long to your taunts, had not my bosom's innocence supported me against them? Had I really been the murderer of my father, to my own conviction, do you suppose, I could have so tamely listened to your reproaches, in consequence of the act? Tush! no! I listened to you merely because I had an object to attain from your vehemence; an object, the dearest that interests my present existence. Aye — Stokesbury — under competent instructions I wanted to gain from you—the only man who could supply it—proof, full proof, that I had not the misfortune to be your son. And, sir, you are quite right in an observation you made a little while ago — you saw me pale, and weak, and horrified, when you named all the proofs which made me Connor Kennedy's son, supposing me to be his murderer. But

again you mistook—you interpreted into the outward show of a guilty conscience, what were only the workings of an affrighted and an abstracted soul. Yes—my cheek was livid, and the damp was upon my brow; but these signs came simply because I was smitten to my very heart as you carefully presented before me the portraiture of the hideous crime to which you had provoked me, and of which I felt I might possibly have been guilty. Yes, Stokesbury, the mere idea that I had been on the road to become a parricide made cold the very marrow in my bones—cold—cold—as the northern ice. Stokesbury—when I rushed from your presence, out of the house, to which you last brought me, the spirit you had put into me, and the spirit you had sent with me, did not accompany me far. There was a mild coolness in the breeze of the night which, as it flitted against my burning brow and breast, wafted to me an exorcising human feeling. Such a feeling as could not

commit a murder.—I paused.—I looked towards the heavens,—the deep-blue sky was thickly strewn with its sparklings of Infinity! and some glorious stars were pre-eminently large, and bright, and pure; and I suddenly thought they might have been some of the many strong eyes of the great God—which we know, are always above us, and around us, looking down, not angrily, but oh! how much more chidingly than if angry, upon my hellish purpose! And with the thought of Him, Stokesbury, with the suddenly unfolded, and re-expanded idea of Him, His grace showered upon my heart; and I fancied that the stars I had been looking at arranged themselves into the words of some mightly language inscribing across the expanse of the whole firmament—"Thou shalt do no murder!"—and I seemed to feel that the bland and odorous breeze became instinct and articulate, and like the whisper of a child—angels syllabled the same command into mine ear! And then, Stokesbury,

(and at last I call upon you, in my turn, to listen, for *you* have often called upon *me* this evening to listen to you)—then, Harry Stokesbury, tears burst from my scorching eyes—aye in torrents did they burst, and I was not, and I am not ashamed of them; and my knees, of their own accord, sunk under me, and I could pray. And, after having prayed, I could reflect! and the black cloud that you had hung over my soul rolled away from it, like the morning mist from the obscured mountain; and oh—then—then—came the conviction of the enormity of the horrible deed I had left you to perpetrate! And I firmly resolved not only to shed no blood of the man whom you said had injured me, but I also resolved—because I feared you, Stokesbury—to hinder you, from shedding his blood by your own hand, or by any other hand, or means—and after this resolution, I was calm enough to proceed to the bed-side of a friend, although an humble one, who, before I knocked at

his door, had resigned himself to the quiet of sleep, and a good conscience; and he did not prove lukewarm to my summons, or my necessity; and, in fact, we spoke at length together; and, by his advice, I came here to meet you as I have met you."

"And pray, who is this sage?" demanded Stokesbury;— "and where is he now?"

"I am very glad to tell you he is *there*," answered Gerald, pointing to a large folding screen, at one side of the extensive old fashioned chamber; and as Harry Stokesbury turned his scowling, inquisitive eyes, in that direction, they rested upon the spare features of the Mayor of Wind-gap, who, with his osier-wand of office, in his right hand, sedately advanced: immediately followed by a very aged white-headed man, who came forward, leaning on his polished staff, to take his station at the Mayor's right hanc; and by a younger personage, who with many obesiances, also assumed his

station at the Mayor's left hand. And in this order, the three at last stood still, full to the chin of the important business in which they were called on to interfere, and pronounce their judgment.

CHAPTER VII.

On board his fast-scudding ship, Stokesbury's rough-and-ready crew thought little of the boisterousness of their commander which used to flare out and betray itself in violent words and actions, on trivial occasions. But when he paced his quarter-deck, up and down, taking no notice of them, or of any thing around him; uttering not a word; and his brow half-hiding his inward-turned eye, and his arms folded hard into each other; when thus they beheld him, the scoundrels would look to

their weapons—well knowing from experience that a desperate business was to be engaged in, of the nature of which, however, they were to learn nothing until the moment should arrive for taking it in hand.

And such now was the expression of his knotted brow, and such was his calm unexcited austerity of manner.

He and Maurteen Maher eyed each other for a moment. His worship spake first.

"Yes, masther Harry Stokesbury, its tee-totally of my conthrivance; the poor boy came to me, in a great puzzle of mínd; and when I coaxed him to tell every thing, the thought enthered into my head to advise him to make a purtense of doing what you wanted him to do; because I guessed that if you were sure the deed was done, you'd be for provin' plain to him that he was the son of the murthered man."

"In the devil's name, who are you?" aske Stokesbury.

"Why, for the matther of that, we'll neither say nor do, make question nor give answer, in the divil's name; we want to have no rubbins to his sort; we are not his sarvants. And, more be token, masther Harry, to remind you that the divil and myself are no great cronies, did'nt I spile sport on him this very night?"

"Who, or what are you, I say?"

"And don't you remember axin' me that question before now, the night of the last bonfire? and don't you remember the plain answer I made you, masther Harry?"

"No fellow! I have no recollection whatever of you; speak plain, now, and at once, and curse you!"

"Och, as to the curse, *crossh-chrustha* between you and me, and all harm, amin: but its known to all the neighbours that I hould authority over the Mayor of this town; I have rule of Wind-gap hill, and I belive that's a step above him, by raison its on a hoighth if there was no other

raison. And I'm come here to-night, me and my mayor's council, that you see at ach side o' me, to bring pace and good will, undher God, masther Harry Stokesbury; to fend, and to prove, and to make the right appear clear before the world."

"We'll see the right done, plaze God," said ould Daddy Leeach; and Gregory Roche gave his consent by iterating with a bow, "plaze God."

Stokesbury continued for a space, staring at the law-givers, as if to make them out, or comprehend the nature of their interference. Suddenly, with a careless shrug, he turned to Gerald Kennedy:

"I neither understand nor care about this mummery," he said "but you know me as the foe of you and yours; — look to yourself;—my arm is over you;—look to yourself."

He strode about the room in the manner we have already attributed to him, when on board his pirate ship; he paused; he

scrutinized anew the strange group near him; and then slowly and coolly he was leaving the apartment.

"You cannot pass us yet, Masther Harry," said Maurteen Maher, intercepting him.

"No! and who opposes my free passage?" laughed Stokesbury.

"I!" answered Maurteen, "but 'tis only for your good, and the good of others; we want to know your intentions, and to make you have good intentions, afore you quit us."

"Out of my way, idiot!" The bravo raised his hand.

The Mayor on his part struck his wand of office sharply against the floor; and Stokesbury was instantly seized by four powerful fellows who issued from behind the screen whence his worship himself had made his appearance; and one of them was Meehawl O' Moore, the man of straw, upon the night of the bonfire; and another was

was the young giant who had masqueraded as his female companion, on the same occasion. Stokesbury was so truly taken by surprize that he could offer no resistance; and in a few seconds he found himself deprived of his pistols, which he wore in his belt, under his cloak, and of the sinister-looking hanger which dangled at his side.

Directly Stokesbury was secured, and rendered incapable of doing what the Mayor of Windgap feared he might do, namely, an outrage in the house which covered them both. Maurteen commanded his satellites to leave the pirate free, loudly adding, "and take yourselves home to Wind-gap, now, as fast as ye can trot, and go to your beds, and sleep away the remainder o' the night, or rather, the morning that's left; but," he added, into the ear of Meehawl O'Moore, without any person's observation, "Stay in this house, for all that; and if ye do any thing better than another, keep a strict watch on the door of Mr. Ken-

nedy's room;" and so his efficient, but illegal, bailiffs departed.

The Mayor now regularly turned to the business before him; and, in proceeding with it, proved not only that he had well studied his part, but also the character of the man he had to deal with.

Without at all losing sight of his own dignity, he began by craving Stokesbury's forgiveness for having ordered his detention; and explaining himself upon the grounds that he had acted for Stokesbury's own good, as well as of that of every other human being; and that his only objects were the promotion of "pace and quietness, and making the right appear."

For he knew that Stokesbury's deadly and devilish rage against his cousin proceeded from a misapprehension of that cousin's conduct, in all the matters which related to them both. He knew that, by the villanous contrivances of Kynan Donnelly, Harry Stokesbury had been induced to re-

gard Connor Kennedy in the light in which the unfortunate bravo had represented him to Gerald, while urging the young man to become a murderer. He knew that Stokesbury, originally engrossed by an all-absorbing hatred and passion, as well as by his rapid changes from place to place, each being remote from the other, and particularly by the mode of life in which he was now confirmed, had neither had wish nor opportunity to undeceive himself; he knew, in fact, that up to the present moment, he had acted altogether on false impressions; and the peacemaker of Wind-gap now set about placing the true state of the case before Stokesbury's eyes.

The reader is already generally acquainted with the facts necssary to be detailed for the object he had in view, by Maurteen Maher, in order "to make the right appear." But Maurteen did not content himself with mere assertions: upon each point necessary to be established he was ready, either with

proofs or with witnesses. By the very mouth of the person who had drawn up old Stokesbury's will, and who awaited his summons in a contiguous apartment, he demonstarted, not only that Connor Kennedy had not intrigued to have that instrument moulded to his purposes, or in his favour, but that he had endeavoured, by every means, to prevent it from being so framed; nay, that the very moment it had came into his hands he had destroyed it.

By another evidence, as well as by the production of authenticated accounts, he proved that Connor Kennedy, so far from making use of the yearly proceeds of his cousin's paternal property, had most profitably accumulated them; and, moreover, to the sum thus realized, he had added the unfortunate Mary Bryan's dower, living only upon the pittance of its interest, and destining all as a provision for Stokesbury's daughter Anny.

His worship of Wind-gap further de-

monstrated that Connor Kennedy was not to be blamed for his cousin's miserable exposure at the bar of justice; inasmuch as he had been a poor maniac at the time, and for many years subsequently; and one of the most important points of his case, that Mary Bryan and Connor Kennedy had been man and wife two months before the draw ing of old Stokesbury's will; and that, of course, their marriage had not been brought about in order to accommodate themselves in the Law's eye to its provisions.

Having gone so far in his case, Maurteen Maher paused a moment to observe what effect it and his own oratory had produced. When he first began to speak, he saw that he was listened to with lofty, tho' suppressed, rage and withering contempt, alone. To this succeeded a haughty indifference and an air of abstraction, real or assumed. But when the person who had drawn up the will entered the room, and declared what he knew, Stokesbury's look

and manner evinced a great and stern surprise. Then he shewed incredulity and contempt again. He condescended, however, to cross-question this witness, and, finding him firm and consistent, his features, despite of his evident attempts to master them, now wore an astounded expression.

Connor Kennedy's accounts were laid before him by a confidential clerk. He snatched the books, and examined them with a deep frowning attention; sometimes looking off the columns of figures, straight before him, with a vague stare; or drawing in his lips, or heaving long, hard sighs: and when, at length, his investigation had ended, he sat motionless on his chair, his clenched hands resting upon his knees.

The Mayor of Wind-gap, not quite dissatisfied with these signs of the inward workings of the man, judiciously went forward, in course, to the most difficult topic he had to approach and arrange.

He began it by speaking of Kynan Don-

nelly. Without yet making effective use of him, he dwelt upon his character, as deceptive, lying, venal, and treacherous; appealed to Stokesbury to admit his general assertions, and experienced, at least, no dissent, from them. He next roundly accused the fellow of treachery towards Stokesbury himself; nay, and of a deeper kind than he had ever practised upon any one else. The listener started up, fully aroused and earnest. Maurteen repeated what he had said, and then divided his accusation into separate charges, the last of which seemed to drive Stokesbury almost frantic.

"Since proofs are so ready to your hand, old man, these things you must prove to me, as clear as the day's light, by heaven!" he cried.

"Nothin' aisier in life, Masther Harry, dear," replied the Mayor, smiling; "and before continuing regularly, he dwelt upon the heinousness of Donnelly's ingratitude,

in being capable of committing towards his old master, and first and best benefactor, deception or wrong of any kind; and Maurteen mixed up with all this a due portion of deferential bearing, and a little judicious flattery towards "Masther" Harry Stokesbury; and he repeated "nothin' asier in life, as I tould you afore; will the words out of his own mouth bring content to your mind? if we can conthrive, with the little senso the Lord gave us, to have you overhear him confess every thing I lay at his dour, what will you think of us, then, Masther Harry?"

In fine, his worship, with many entreaties, prevailed upon Stokesbury to retire behind the screen, before spoken of; then went down stairs; returned with Donnelly by his side; led him close to the screen, and began speaking with him in a tone of voice sufficiently low not to reach the ears of his council and of Gerald Kennedy, who stood at the opposite corner of the room,

and yet loud enough to convey to Stokesbury every word they interchanged together.

"Kynan Donnelly, every thing is done clever, in the way that you and I layed it but; Harry Stokesbury is in the body of the goal."

"And you tould him that you had me locked up on the same score?" asked the ruffian.

"I tould him so, sure enough;—just as you did me do, Kynan, my boy."

"Was there any notion in his head that I turned agin him, in the long run, Maurteen?"

"Masther, aye; now that you remind me of it, I won't say but there was somethin' o' the kind in his head, honest Kynan; for when Roger Divey, and all the rest o' them, were taking him away to his night's lodging, a little while ago, he turned round to me, and, with a look that frightened me, says he, 'this is Donnelly's doins,' says

he; 'tell him I know him; tell him that I found out a thiny, or two, about him, since we last parted; tell him that I know it was between him and Roger Divey I was sould the night I broke open the Inch house; tell him that it was by his contrivance Mary Bryan was married to Connor Kennedy; and tell him over again," says he, "that I'll pay him for all together, before he and I are much oulder."

"Murdher and fury! did he spake those words to you, Maurteen Maher?"

"The very words I tell to you he spoke to me."

"By the night that's in id! an' I had a fear all along of his comin', somehow, to that knowledge. Oh! if 'tis a thing he gets free this time, I'm a gone man! I would'nt give a rotten *thrauneen* for my own life, if ever he comes again beyond the goal dour. Were the life of ten cats in me, he'd have em all: were I hidin' twenty perches under the ground, he'd dig me up, and he'd dhrag

me up into the day-light, and another day-light I'd never see."

"You say what's thrue enough, Kyran Donelly," assented the Mayor of Wind-gap, with very much of the air and manner of a Job's comforter.

"There's but one way left for me to turn; I must jump up on the green cloth, and sware agin him on his thrial; I have more knowledge of his ways than'ud hang twenty men!"

"It's well guessed you have, Kynan; I know, of my own knowledge, that no one can tell betther nor you who forced off Juff Carroll's daughther."

"It was himself! and I'll prove it agin him; there's no one to stand up for Kynan Donnelly, now, but Kynan Donnelly's four bones."

"And taking away Miss Anny Kennedy, too?" continued Maurteen Maher.

"Yes, and that, too;—I'll sware down all, all I know, to hang him well, well!"

"But if you didn't sware agin him, at all, Kynan, it's the like enough he'd forgive you, as Connor Kennedy did."

"Forgive me! oh, never, till the day of judgment, and the day after it, into the bargain, if *he* knows *me* as, he says, *I* know *him*."

"But, sure, he'd understand, now, after twenty years, at laste, there was no great blame to be laid to you for bringing about the marriage between Mary Bryan and Connor Kennedy? Did'nt he give you good cause for a little revenge of that kind, a short while afore?"

"Who tould you o' that?" demanded Donnelly, in surprise.

"Oh! I was good friends with your poor Nance Dunney; I had a liking for her as well as yourself, and I could have found it in my heart to give a helping hand at the killing o' Masther Harry, when he brought the destruction on her young head; and sure, as I said afore, you had some

right to make Mary Bryan turn away from him, when he took Nance Dunney from you."

"I know there was little blame to me for doing what I did; I had a long love for Nance, and I'd do any thing, at that time, to be even with him, on her account."

"No wondher, no wondher; and, sure, if you hadn't tould him all them stories about Connor Kennedy, Masther Harry and he would have come together again, in the long run, and you would have been found out, wouldn't you?"

"Aye, aye; but they'd lay their heads together, and I'd be done for instead of Connor Kennedy."

"There's little doubt of that, I believe," again agreed the Mayor, gravely nodding at him; "and wasn't it the same thing over again, the night he broke into the Inch-house? Sure, if Roger Divey and yourself hadn't brought the army on him,

he'd have soon come to the bottom of the whole business?"

"There's no denyin' id, Maurteen Maher."

"Well, well," continued Maurteen more gravely, and even ominously: "and I'm not far asthray, Kynan Donnelly, if what you're afther sayin' dosen't turn out to be enough *to make the blind get back their eye-sighth.*"

While laying particular emphasis on these last words, Maurteen allowed, as if by chance, his wand of office to tap against the screen; and while Donnelly was gazing at the Mayor, to try and ascertain the cause of his altered tone and manner, his eyes followed those of his worship, and rested on the person of Harry Stokesbury.

The effect produced upon the scoundrel was inexpressible. He saw that he was betrayed on every side, and that the man whose power he regarded as almost unbounded, and whose retaliation he well knew to be terrible, was now in full possession of

his villanous practices. He could not withdraw his glance from that of the object of his dread, which became immediately, and overpoweringly, fixed on his. His cheeks and lips grew ashy-livid, and his limbs shook till they smote each other.

"I have been listening to you," said Stokesbury, in a deep, guttural under-voice, "and I need not tell you I will answer you."

He re-commenced his former hasty pace about the room, while Donnelly staggered into a corner. He stopped—turned his regards on the floor, and seemed wrapped up in his thoughts; and he stopped only a few feet from the spot to which Donnelly had retired. Suddenly the wretch's eye caught the pistol flung away by Gerald Kennedy: he cringed down cautiously for it; and, his sole impulse being now to rid himself of the tremendous man whom he had just aroused to vengeance—the weapon was instantly at Stokesbury's ear. Gerald Ken-

nedy sprang forward, and seized, and bore down his arm.

"What!" muttered Stokesbury to himself, "and is that action possible from that boy?—Is it really possible, from what they call their human nature?" And he looked on with a stern, half-smiling, curiosity and interest.

"Let go my arm," said Donnelly, in a shivering whisper, as if he spoke confidentially, what he deemed worthy of attention from the person he addressed. "Let go my arm!—didn't you hear the words he said? I remember well they were the same he spoke when he made up his mind to kill Connor Kennedy. Let go my arm, I say."

Gerald still only endeavoured to wrest the pistol from him.

"By the fire of hell, then!" roared Donnelly, forgetting his former intention, and suddenly fixing his vengeance on the person who had crossed him:—"Your life, or my life, for it!"

They struggled again. Stokesbury took a half step forward, as if to interfere, and by one twist of his arm end the dispute; but, keenly eyeing the vigorous efforts of Gerald, he arrested himself, still strangely smiling. We have said, that Meehawl O'Moore, and his three sub-bailiffs, had retired to do duty in a remote part of the house: old Joseph Fitzgerald had for some time also withdrawn, to share his terrors with his wife; so that, except Stokesbury, and the Mayor of Wind-gap and his council, no one was now present to interrupt the deadly tug which went on. Stokesbury, however, would not interrupt it; and when old "Daddy Leeach" courageously, though impotently, and when Gregory Roche, politely, though in a very cowardly fashion, made signs of peace-making, Maurteen Maher giving way, notwithstanding "the little sense that the Lord had blessed him with," and that the "neighbours" had avouched he possessed, to the leaven of

superstition, imbedded in his habits, authoritatively waived his wand, and cried out—

"No, Shawn Leeach! No, Gregory Roche! Let ach man o'ye keep back! It is his doom! It is his doom, that he's working through! it is the hour of his doom that is coming upon him! He will kill, or he'll be killed on the spot! Let no man meddle with his doom!"

Daddy Leeach and Gregory Roche could, therefore, only look on, during the exciting contest; the snowy head of the former, universally palsied with great anxiety, and the latter, ejaculating, in fear or in admiration, at intervals.

But the Mayor of Wind-gap spoke most and loudest:—"Gorsoon," said he, "your hour is come! Mind yourself! Mind yourself, Gerald Kennedy! He is a sthrong man you're wrastling with—your life is at the risk, boy! Oh Mother of God! you are doing a foolish thing now! Take your hand from his throath!—and hould *his* hand, that

has got the pistol in it! Och! och! och! He does not heed me! It is at your head, now, Gerald Kennedy! Och! the Lord be with you!—but no,—the pistol wasn't cocked, or you were dead! And now he's cocking it with his teeth! Take your hand from his throath, I bid ye!—take your hand from his throath!"

The combatants here fell on the floor together. Gerald Kennedy under Donnelly; and a cry of terror burst from the Mayor and his council. A second time Henry Stokesbury stepped forward, perhaps to the young man's aid; but before he could manifest his intentions, the pistol exploded. For an instant, Gerald and Donnelly were hidden by its smoke; after which the former jumped up, unhurt, shaking from him the dead body of his antagonist; it was, however, the wretch's own finger which had pulled the trigger of the weapon, without knowing it, its muzzle had been pointed to his own head.

The Mayor and his wise men hurried to Gerald, and overpowered him with congratulations;—they turned to observe Stokesbury. His eyes were rivetted upon the youth, with, Maurteen Maher thought, something like a manly and generous expression;—nay, the old philosopher of Wind-gap deemed that "Masther Henry" appeared half-inclined, also to step forward, and shake him by the hand. But Joseph Fitzgerald, if possible still more terrified than ever, re-entered the room, and saying, "From your cousin, Mr. Kennedy, sir," presented a letter to his old master.

Stokesbury tore open the seal, read the letter, and stood motionless, and, to all who saw him, incomprehensible, in the middle of the apartment. Moisture stole over his forehead, which he wiped off with his spread palm. He read the epistle again. He clasped his hands over the crown of his head; he dragged them down, slowly, and pressed them tight across his eyes. They

unclasped themselves, and he quickly, and often, glanced towards Gerald :—he seemed indecisive,—uncharactered ;—or, we might more properly say, perhaps, beginning to be re-charactered. After another short pause, he walked suddenly to the lad—seized both his wrists, and wrung them; then turned as suddenly to Maurteen Maher, and whispered a word to him; then said to Joseph Fitzgerald,—" My answer is—' No, not to-night ;' " and after this, he slowly quitted the apartment, and the house.

CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY the next day, Maurteen Maher, pretending that it was a favourable one "for the sport," buckled on his fishing-basket, and, with his angle in his hand, sauntered slowly along the river's bank. Brother sportsmen thought him grown very ungracious of a sudden, however; for they remarked that the sun shone hotly upon the water, and the most foolish young trout beneath its surface would have sense enough to remain, till the cool of the evening, at least, as near the bottom of the river as

possible. But, careless of these criticisms, the Mayor pursued his way, and might be seen, at a little distance from Wind-gap screwing together his fishing-rod, and gravely making all necessary preparations for engaging in his favorite pastime. The only persons who ventured to vindicate the sanity of his proceedings, after he had turned his back on his subjects, were his council, Shawn Leeach and Gregory Roche; and then it became publicly whispered that he and they had been stricken—"the three o' them together," and at one and the same time, with a very singular want of common sense; and great was the sensation of awe and regret thereby impressed upon "the neighbours." Nor was it till the real object of old Maurteen's ramble, that day, became guessed at, some time after, that he and his superior law-givers were re-instated in popular confidence.

At a lonely spot, by the river's side, about a mile from his commonwealth, Maur-

teen encountered a man, carefully disguised, in a great coat, bushy wig, and an uncouthly-shaped hat. They seemed to meet by previous appointment; and, while they spoke at length together, Maurteen in a cautious voice, and the other in a broken, half-wailing one, now took the private path to the house at the Inch, and, unobserved by any person, entered it at the rear.

We next find Maurteen seated at the curiously-carved table, in the curiously-furnished room of which, on a former occasion, we have had a passing knowledge. Henry Stokesbury sits before him, and they are alone.

The countenance of the old diplomatist, notwithstanding a previous resolution to keep it calm and impassive, was sharpened and lengthened into a curious expression of shrewd investigation and reasoning, of doubting, and hoping, and balancing, of gratified good-feeling, and of wary anxiety. The character of that of the pirate,

we scarce venture to indicate. Its sternness, its fierceness, its sneer, its recklessness, its daring, still remained stamped upon it; yet these qualities of his mind and habits might, perhaps, be said at present to be exteriorly legible, rather from the remains of the effects of their former physical manifestation, than from any outward play of them, which, as Maurteen Maher studied his companion, now met the eye. Oftener than in his life before, his powerful glances were half veiled beneath his falling lids, or else they dropped upon the floor. He sat quieter, and more posed than usual: and, above all things, his voice was modulated, generally speaking, into sounds that did not startle, or offend, or grate on the ear of a listener; although, now and then, Maurteen found that the most slightly-injudicious word or question, or something not clearly understood, or else caught up without sufficient examination, was enough to bring an echo of the old explosions round his head.

The two had for some time been conversing; they continued, after a pause; old Maurteen leading the discourse, as, indeed, he had done since they sat down together.

"In the name of Him who is ever ready to forgive us all, you had betther see that man, Masther Harry, *a chorra;* just let me send to the town for him—won't you?"

"No.—But I do not refuse, because I do not forgive;—tush—I have nothing to forgive—nothing, to a human creature, except myself. 'Tis not that;—no; but I cannot bring myself to look upon his face;—'twas always hateful to me; and how can it become pleasing to me of a sudden?"

"No, Masther Harry,—I ax your pardon for bein' unmannerly enough to make a contradiction; but, long afore it grew hateful to you, it was plasin' to you; and for a good rason—it had a great likeness to another one you loved dearly—to your own mother's."

"Hum—and that is true." He turned

aside his head, and remained without speaking a moment; then resumed—"but no, no —curse it, no! Be silent, old fellow, on that point in future. And let us now end all our business. You can lead the girl back into the town. She prefers it to leaving Ireland with me. So let her have her way. I deserve it from her. Pshaw! I deserve every thing—its to your sister's affair—take her too, and settle it, and her, as you like. Here's a little bag of old gold for her; buy up your Mayoralty of Wind-gap with it, and share the estate between ye."

"Buy up Wind-gap wid id, Sir?" smiled, nay, almost laughed, nay, almost grinned the Worshipful Maurteen Maher, unconsciously descending, a moment, from his staid point of habitual, self-commanding gravity. "And do you think there is enough o' goold in it, for that same?"

"Poh, nonsense! don't annoy me further upon a matter already settled."

Maurteen weighed the money-bag between his hands, and drew a long sigh.

"It's a truth," he resumed, "that there must be a great dale o' the goold in it, but I'll tell you what's come into my mind, Masther Harry; I covet no more out of it, nor out o' you, than what will keep my poor sisther from wantin' the bare bread, while she's alive on this earth, repentin' of her sins, and if there's more than that in the little bag, I'd rather not take it home with me."

Stokesbury laughed. "Oh yes! I see; you think 'tis money not honestly come by; and, therefore, you won't have it, lest it should turn into bits of slate in your hands. Well, well, as you like; keep no portion of it you don't think yourself entitled to, but hand over the conscientious surplus to your chaplain, and he, I suppose, will know what to do with it."

"If you mane," answered Maurteen, "to help the poor priest of our chapel, and the

poor chapel itself, Masther Harry, I don't see a betther thing you could do with any odds and ends ye may have to spare; he's a poor little ould man, God know's; and as to the poor little ould chapel, too, the rain does be dhroppin' down through the rotten thatch of its roof, over his bald head, while he says Mass to us of a Sunday; an' sure when you'd have the prayers o' the Christhins for a good action o' that sort, twouldn't be money thrown away, supposin' you were a man as free from sin as the child is that never was born."

"Folly, I say, old oddity; I don't want your preachments to day; I've been thinking of one thing or another without your help; take charge of this second little canvass bag, and share it as you like, between your two chaplains, below there—your loyal one, and your popish one; and hark ye, just tell them both to serve it out, amongst such poor devils as the world—

mark ye, as the world — thinks want it least."

"The Lord reward ye!" muttered Maurteen piously, and heart-touched; for he saw that under the words and the manner of Harry Stokesbury, there was still something like a conviction of wrong, and a wish for, at least, earthly atonement. "The Lord reward ye, as ye deserve to be rewarded, from your present feelings."

"Amen, old man!" said Stokesbury, hastily, and his companion scarce heard his words, nor was he himself quite conscious of them.

"What did you say, Masther Harry?"

"Nothing, nothing; but here's a little silk purse, full enough of guineas, too, that you are to leave at the door of a foolish man, here, one Carroll I think; and there may be other people in this neighbourhood who imagine I have annoyed them; and for their whims also, there is provision enough under my hands, at your Worship's service;

and so now, stuff the only fishes you have caught to-day into that ridiculous looking basket on your back; and as Anny is clamorous for your protection into the town—a curious old fellow you must be by the way, to make us all so dependent on you. You may go look for her through the house; and you'll find her in some chamber, closeted with your sister—whom she has already made a saint of—and that Juff Carroll's daughter, and Juff Carroll's niece into the bargain; and then you may lead the whole bevy where ye like, and do whatever you wish with them; quick, quick! for I have something else to think of before night."

"But your own daughther won't lave the house, without seeing you, Masther Harry?" queried Maurteen.

"Oh yes, yes, she will! she does not wish to see any more of me, she wishes, from her heart," he added, in the most humane tone, which Maurteen had yet heard him utter,

"she wishes from her heart, that she had never, never seen me, or heard of me."

"And I'll be bound, you are wrong again, Masther Harry, in saying that; I have a way of my own, in finding out what a body thinks of another body; and I know one thing this moment—Miss Anny would cross the says with you, from Ireland's ground, if she could only hear you tell that the boy she loves and likes was to be at her side; and understand from you, moreover, where ye were all goin' to live, and what ye were all to do for a livin' when ye get there."

Stokesbury laughed again, but not heartily, nor with his usual expression, and said, "What absurdity! as for that lad, and Anny, why should I hinder their coming together? but as for the other question, I have already answered *you* by saying, I would never answer *it*, old fellow: it will be enough for you all to know that wherever I go, or whatever I do, when for the

last time I leave my native country—and that too, in a few hours—I will not go where I have gone before, and I will not do what I have done before."

"The Lord be praised for them words, and keep ye in your own good resolution, Masther Harry, *a chorra*," exclaimed old Maurteen, tears starting from his eyes as he steadfastly and compassionately regarded him.

"What! you old fool," cried Stokesbury smiling gruffly, as their glances met, "and do you mean to make me think that I shall leave a single human being behind me, in Ireland, whose eye can moisten at a recollection of me, or of my fate or fortune?"

"I do, Masther Harry, I do!" answered Maurteen, standing up, impassioned—"and I tell you more than that; I tell you that you'll lave friends at home—here, near the ould house at the Inch—that will think of you, and have compassion for you, and

pray for a forgiveness for you, to their dying day—and I tell you that I'm one of them friends; will you shake my ould hand and let me hear from your lips that ye b'lieve what I say is the thruth?"

Instead of waiting to receive the hand that he had asked for, Maurteen suddenly took, and wrung it. Stokesbury, still seated, first stared at him; then, with a half-sneer, half-smile, turned away his face, and returned the old man's grasp.

"And, och, I'm only the last, and the laste worthy of them friends," continued Maurteen. "Come in, Miss Anny, come in! avoch! sure you're another of them, an' many steps higher than me, even if I were sated in my chair, on the top of Wind-gap itself! and come in, Miss Anny, wid the better friend than all, that's now at your side."

Maurteen spoke this close to the door; it was timidly, and slowly opened, and Harry Stokesbury saw his daughter

enter the room, supporting on her arm a tall, worn man, whose head and shoulders, drooped and bent prematurely forward, whose face was pale, and greatly agitated, and whose step was nervously unsure. He slowly arose; approached the weeping girl, and, in answer to her unexpected proffer, touched with his lips, in surprise, in deep feeling, and almost in confusion, her tearful cheek.

"And who is your friend, Anny?" he asked.

"*Your* cousin, father;" she answered, bursting into fresh tears: "Your cousin, Connor Kennedy."

He started back to a great distance, and yet, not in avoidance, or dislike, but evidently in utter amazment, and perhaps sympathy.

"What! that man, Connor Kennedy! that man, the Connor Kennedy, now only in the prime of life, as to years, who, when I saw him last, was so tall, and so straight, and so comely!"

"Yes, Masther Harry, that is the man:" said Maurteen Maher.

"Yes, Harry, I am the man, and the man too, that loved you then, as he loves you now, without a difference as to time, or chance, or accident: Harry Stokesbury, my dear cousin, forgive me, and take my hand."

"Forgive you, Connor! *I* forgive *you?*"

Stokesbury, quite thrown off his guard, seized the hands that were outstretched to him; these hands he felt gradually free themselves and glide along his arms, to his shoulders; and almost in spite of himself, at the moment, though not afterwards with regret, to his recollections, he once more embraced the cousin whom in early life he had loved.

A few words close our story. After some conversation, Stokesbury placed in Connor Kennedy's hands the legal documental proofs of his marriage in a foreign

country, with the mother of his daughter, Anny—together with a detail of the circumstances which caused their separation almost immediately after marriage, and her return to Europe; and Connor Kennedy explained the chances, and the means, by which he had become acquainted with the almost destitute state of the degraded lady. and had it in his power to succour her, and upon her death, adopt her orphan girl.

Anny was not present during this explanation.

"That girl," observed Stokesbury, suddenly, "will never become your son's wife, if she knows that she is the child of a really degraded father, so guard well from her some points of the history of my life, Connor; at least till they are married."

"All that you wish shall be done," replied Kennedy; "and though you cannot stay with us, shall we not hear from you, when you are settled abroad?"

"Do you really wish it?" asked Stokesbury.

"Oh, God knows, God knows I do," he replied, clasping his hands, and looking upwards with streaming eyes.

"You shall then," resumed the other, tightly grasping his arm — and Maurteen thought he observed the first glistening of moisture upon the lids of the outcast man.

Connor Kennedy did afterwards hear from Harry Stokesbury, and to his satisfaction.

That night, a coach-and-four was seen at a late hour to dash furiously away from the house at the Inch, by a peasant, who chanced upon some extreme case of necessity to be out of his bed, at the time; and this observer reported that the coach was black; that the horses were black; that the two very ill-favoured, grinning postilions, who shouted furiously, as they cracked their

wips, and made their horses gallop along, were also very nearly black; that the horses snorted fire, to say nothing of their pawing it up, out of the road! and that the wheels were encircled with ribbons of flame. And other things, related of this sudden and mysterious departure, left, after due consideration, upon the minds of the dwellers near the Inch house, that its "strange Man," had all along been connected with no creditable acquaintances, who, at last, had come to claim him, and lead him home. Some, indeed, objected to his having been waited upon with a carriage, remarking that "them kind of folk," need not have used any such means to make sure of his person; but the majority easily explained this away, by making the devil allow him a stylish turn-out at his exit from this world, in polite deference to the rank which he had held in it; and a few knowing ones, who would be original enough to differ from this judgment, suggested that

the carriage might have been driven up to the door of the house, in order to wheedle him into a seat in it, and then had whirled him off, against his will.

These charitable conclusions seemed afterwards corroborated by some awful occurrences. Just facing the celebrated house, at the opposite side of the river, stood a large granite rock, and nearly under its shadow dwelt the largest trout in the river; nearly all "sieve-makers," in Maurteen Maher's parlance; and after night-fall of a fine evening was the best time to take these esteemed denizens of the water:— well — a certain gigantic smith, Shaw Mulligan by name, and his son Pandye, were great frequenters of this popular angling station; and during the night of the suspicious journey of the strange Man, they had been fishing there as usual; when lo, of a sudden, Shawn was dragged up to the top of the rock, and from his convenient elevation, he saw, looking across the river, flashes of fire

ascend from the ground round the Inch house, and running, and capering through them, the figure of a man, who tossed his arms on high in a most fearful manner; and thenceforward, never did Shawn, or his son, or any one, on whom they had influence, venture near the granite-rock after night-fall.

But another person, who unfortunately had not heard this tale of terror, occupied the same spot, a few nights afterwards; and while in the very act of casting his line over a trout that rolled in the water, he said, like a "gear ould dog," he was suddenly seized by the skirts of his coat, and pulled backwards with a force that nearly dragged not only the skirts out of that coat, but the back bone out of his own body; all the while that the most devilish shouts and laughter were let loose into his ears; and, need it be added, that as soon as this ill-treated angler found himself free, he took to his heels; halted not till he had gained

unhaunted ground; and thence plodded the rest of his way homeward to warn all his neighbours against visiting the unholy place on the river's side; no matter though at the loss of the finest trout that ever swam in the said river.

These terrible accidents, coupled with the strange man's still more terrible departure from the house at the Inch, and indeed with the vicinity of the dreaded house itself, soon left the famous rock pretty generally unvisited. In fact only one individual continued to have the hardihood to resort to it during the stilly nights of summer; and great indeed was his courage, the neighbours thought; — for no one outwardly seemed more impressed than himself with the perils there to be encountered. For many a long year however, he turned to a good account his monopoly of this station;—and often, and often, as Gerald Kennedy and his wife strolled after night-fall along the banks of their beautiful stream, they were sure to

stop and have a chat, under the huge pile of granite, with Maurteen Maher, the Mayor of Wind-gap.

END OF THE MAYOR OF WIND-GAP.

CANVASSING.

CANVASSING.

CHAPTER I.

Lord Glenville and Lord Warringdon were lounging together over a fashionable late breakfast.

"Recollect, Warringdon, you are to be with Cropper and Baines by four this morning, to hear about that girl."

"Time enough," replied Lord Warringdon, carelessly.

"You'll let her slip through your fingers, as you are going on; I see that very plainly."

"Probably," rejoined the son: "luckily, she is not the only heiress to be found in the city. Besides, to confess the truth, I am in no hurry to run my neck into the noose, if I can help it."

"*If*," replied the father, significantly.

"I think that the heir to a hundred thousand a year, well paid, and but slightly encumbered, *might* help it," retorted the son.

"*I* think," observed the father, "that five thousand a year is a tolerably fair allowance for presents to opera people, and *douceurs* to ladies' maids."

"Not when ninety-five thousand is not found too much for the same purpose," retorted the son, with a sneer.

"Oh! as for that, Warringdon," replied Lord Glenville, affecting not to hear the foregoing remark; "you cannot have money in every way: you quite forget that your two last contested elections cost me fifty thousand pounds, besides having had

to pay back all the money you won on that cursed Twickenham party; and then, the rascally newspapers; recollect all it cost me to make them hold their tongues. I assure you, I had to pave your way out of that business with bank-bills. I often told you that one should never undertake a thing of the kind, unless one had nerve to go through with it. Better never win, unless you make up your mind to fight the man, if he objects to the fairness of the transaction. Don't you see, Warringdon?"

"For heaven's sake, spare me that irksome subject; we have already gone over the ground so often, that I know, by heart, all you would say. I have before assured you, that I shall never attempt recruiting my finances again in that way. With respect to the obligation you would fix on me, for arranging the affair, you must pardon my not seeing the business in the same light; had you honoured my draughts, I should not have been driven to such extre-

mities." And so saying, his lordship pushed his cup from him, and threw back his handsome head with an air of languid haughtiness.

His father glanced at him a moment, without speaking, and then, smiling coldly, observed, "*Raison de plus*, my good fellow, for looking after the heiress."

Their tête á tête was interrupted by the entrance of a footman with the morning papers, and a packet of notes and letters. A silence of some minutes ensued, which was broken by Lord Glenville.

"Who is that letter from, Warringdon?"

"Which; this?" answered his son; pointing to one he had just carelessly thrown aside, of which the delicate hue, exquisite odour, and lightly-traced and undefined characters, breathed womanly grace and frivolity,—"Oh, aye; this is from the prettiest woman in London. I am not going to make you my confessor, though."

"No," said Lord Glenville; "the other letter."

"That? Oh, that's from the next prettiest woman in London. I *did* think her *the* prettiest *dans le bon vieux temps*, a fortnight ago."

"No, no;" said his father, impatiently; "the letter you have there in your hand."

"Here it is for you," answered Lord Warringdon, tossing it towards his father; "I have not read it myself, yet; but it will keep cool, I dare say."

"Ah, very good;" observed Lord Glenville, as he cast his eye over the epistle; "I wonder you did not tell me of this before, my dear Warringdon."

"How the deuce could I, when I had not read it? What's it all about?"

"It is from Wilmot."

"Who the devil is he?" enquired Lord Warringdon.

"Wilmot! Why, don't you recollect, you wrote to canvass him, the other day?

Wilmot, of Castle Wilmot, in the half-unreclaimed Irish county of ———; the husband of Lady Anne, Lord Rochford's daughter;—you recollect, don't you?"

"Oh, aye; I remember, now; what does he say?"

"I may as well read it for you," answered the father.

"Ah, no, tell it for me: I hate the reading, or hearing read, a stupid letter on business," replied the son.

"Well, he says that he will be most happy to give you his interest; he has I do not know how many thousand votes at your disposal; and is very glad that you look to a county in which your family have so large a stake, and so forth; and concludes by begging you to make his house your head-quarters:—very civil, is it not?"

"Yes," replied his son, yawning; "very great bore, though, to have to go there,—drink whisky-punch, and have my ears torn to pieces by their infernal brogue."

"Very true," remarked Lord Glenville; "you cannot, however, have the people's votes without taking a little trouble about them."

"If you would let me sit for one of your boroughs, though, I should be spared all this annoyance. Do you know, I have half a mind to pitch Wilmot, of Castle-Wilmot, and his cursed county, to the devil?"

"Do so, if you like, my good fellow; but how long do you expect to be out of the King's Bench after you have performed that feat? As for the boroughs, I have already told you, that I have sold them, for this time; I wanted money,—so there's an end of them till next parliament. You will walk over the course, in —— Wilmot says; —what more do you want than to *be* in parliament? but it is your affair, not mine. I wish, my dear Warringdon, you would condescend to listen to me, and play with your brute some other time."

Lord Warringdon had been, in fact,

amusing himself watching his superb St. Bernard's dog, tearing one of the billets, received that morning, into as many pieces as his noble master had done the feelings of its fair writer. "Ha, Monk, you rascal, you have been worrying the wrong letter; what a teaze! I did not half read it, either: so I don't know now, whether it is to-day, or to-morrow, that he takes himself off to his fair Terpsichore; leaving his *bella Tradita* to be cheered by his *fido Amico*. Capital, is it not, Monk, my boy? but if I should go the wrong day: what the devil, then? Why, it will be your fault, not mine; and that's some comfort, as times go. Jesting apart, however, it is a nuisance; I thought the fellow was tearing only my love's letter, and it turns out to be my *last* love's; a great bore, is it not?" asked this son of the nineteenth century, of his father.

"Warringdon, the subject upon which I am speaking to you is really a very serious one; and my advice, if you would please to

attend to it, might be of some importance to you."

The modern father did not think, it appears, that a love affair with a married woman was an event requiring his paternal interference. "But I cannot talk with you while you look so listless; do sit down, I beg of you, and favour me with a few moment's notice."

Lord Warringdon threw himself into a Bergère, and his father proceeded. — "A canvass among these hot-headed Irish needs some care, I assure you;—you must lay aside your apathy, your exclusiveness, your indifference, whether you offend or not, and for once in your life you must try to please."

"Must I?"—exclaimed his son, stretching out his finely-turned leg, and examining it with complacency.

The father did not notice the interruption and continued.—"Wilmot has the first interest in his county, and has represented

it before now; but he is at present under embarrassments, I hear;—a sad fellow, for getting through money, as all his compatriotes are;—over head and ears in debt, and obliged to play hide-and-seek occasionally with his creditors, but in Ireland, that's nothing, you know,—then his wife."—

"Have mercy on me," interrupted Lord Warringdon, "are you going to give me the man's pedigree and private history, as if I wanted to write his life."

"She has the name of being a great match-maker," continued Lord Glenville; "and when she was here some years ago, was very busy *in*"—

"What the deuce is all that to me?" asked Lord Warringdon.

"It is a great deal to you;—she has daughters."

"She might have a hundred, for any thing I care;" observed the young Viscount again yawning.

"One of them is very handsome," conti-

nued Lord Glenville, "and clever; now I would caution you."

"Against falling in love with her, is it?" interrupted the son, with a languid laugh. "No fear of that, I promise you—I hate clever women, you know, and make it a rule never to fall in love with any beauties but married ones."

"I know;—but take care, on the other hand, how you assume a prickly air, towards them; for that would not do either—you must admire the daughters' charms, or you will lose the father's votes."

"Never fear;—once in for the thing, I will go through with it properly—I will be dazzled with their brilliancy; captivated with their accomplishments;—and driven mad by their beauty.—Oh, these cursed accomplished beauties!—the brogue, and bad roads, are nothing in comparison. French, Italian and music, conchology, phrenology, and mineralogy;—with a dash of algebra, and animal magnetism, concluding with an

interlude of astronomy and mathematics. There's a bill of fare, enough to strike terror into any heart but that of an Electioneerer," and so saying, he arose, called his dog, hummed a Mazurka, and sauntered out of the room.

A few days afterwards he was in his travelling chariot, rolling off to Holyhead; we cannot better employ our time while he is on the road than by giving some idea of the family who are about to be honoured by his presence.

CHAPTER II.

MR. WILMOT, of Castle Wilmot, was what is termed, in Ireland, a capital fellow;—good-natured, careless, and extravagant. The owner of an estate, like most old Irish ones, a little the worse for the wear, and living away, like most such proprietors, as if the said estate was spick and span new;—in a word, just the man to be loved and robbed by an Irish tenantry and household He had been residing abroad for some years, and had just returned home to "retrnch" as he says, now that he is first introduced

to the reader. But alas! the claret, champagne and Burgundy, continue to be poured forth as liberally as if he were still in the land of vines. There was a second table in his establishment, as expensive as the first; nay, a third and a fourth, which, though less delicate in the quality of their aliments, made up the difference in the quantity consumed. An ox a week, and three sheep a day, was the minimum of provision disposed of in the kitchen, and servants'-hall; and all other things were on the same "grandee" scale of expenditure. His house was always thronged with guests; high and low, rich and poor; all had a "*cead mille faltha*" at Castle Wilmot. The consequences of such a system may be easily guessed. Lady Anne, unable to stop her husband's wild profusion, at last contented herself with turning it to some purpose, and as *he* would have his house filled with company, she took care there should be a fair proportion of marrying men, at a

certain ratio of fortune. By this means, she had already got three daughters off her hands; and she blessed her stars, and so did all who knew her, that she had but two remaining; for Lady Anne's reputation as a match-maker, had rendered her the terror of mothers who had sons, and the envy of those who had daughters.

No expense had been spared on the education of the Miss Wilmots. Mr. Wilmot's residence, whether in London or on the Continent, had, from their infancy, been besieged by Masters and by Mistresses; by teachers of music and teachers of languages. They had learned to dance from Coulon; to sing from Liverati; they spoke French like the *habituées* of the Fauxbourg St. Germain; Italian like Romans. Maria, the eldest of the two remaining girls, being plain, was more especially exhorted by her mother to study "the accomplishments." And Maria had sense enough to follow the advice. She did study "the accomplishments" most assi-

duously, and successfully. But though she spoke all manner of tongues, and played all sorts of instruments; though she dressed like a French-woman; and flirted—like any woman,—some way or other, all these perfections had hitherto been exerted in vain; Maria was still unmarried. The men agreed that she sang and played like an angel; but that she looked like—what it would not be very civil to repeat; but, which, however, some very particular friend of Maria's *did* repeat; whereupon Lady Anne marked the delinquent in her black book, and vowed that she would make him repent before he died—that is to say, marry. Lady Anne, indeed, was the more indignant at the observation, because she felt there was some truth in it. Having, through her own family, an excellent introduction for her daughters, into the best English set, she had once hoped that Maria, although plain, might, perhaps, have been fashionable; but there, again, she was baffled. Maria, though she

had the two essential requisites for fashion, that is to say, intrepidity and hardiness, was considered by her *exclusive* acquaintance, as much too vivacious, ever to become perfectly high bred. Unfortunately for her, she possessed much of the humour of her country; and had, more than once, not only actually laughed herself, but had caused others to perpetrate a similar enormity. She was, in consequence, set down as "sadly Irish," in other words, extreme *mauvais ton;* if not positively vulgar, something closely approximating to it. Maria, it appears, was not aware that although an Englishman, of a certain *caste,* may perchance be induced to enjoy a jest, he never fails to pretend to undervalue the jester, whether the said jester be an amateur, or a buffoon by profession; that, conscious how much trouble a witty saying would cost himself, he imagines the gaiety of his lively neighbours to be as great an effort to them as to him; and that, therefore, when they

laugh, or are brilliant, in his presence, all *that* is done by self-admitted inferiors, to please a superior. So poor Maria was accused of being very Irish.

"Next to saying I picked a bone," said she to her mother, as they chatted over a criticism reported to have been made upon her, the evening before, "or, that I eat with my knife, they could not, according to their code of manners, say a worse thing of me; stupid, prosing set! I will let them see, if we come to the push, that they will have the worst of it. They don't yet know a tithe of what is in me; they imagine, because I do not talk as if I were half asleep, that it is because I cannot talk. To-morrow evening, at my uncle's, I will look, and move, and speak, so like the Lady Vapids, that not one in the room but will confess I could be as 'nice a person,' and as tiresome, as the best among them."

The powers of mimicry which Maria had hitherto restrained, she fully displayed at

her uncle's, on the night of which she had spoken—allowing her fastidious censors to see what was in store for them, if they did not leave her and her Irishism unmolested.

"So, you imagine," said she to one of her critics, "that we laugh to divert you; and that, therefore, you must be gods to us. You are mistaken, my good lord, we do not laugh to amuse you, but to amuse ourselves; we laugh because we like it; because we can't help it, in fact. What would the philosopher of old, who defined man to be a laughing animal, say to you English?—you high English, I mean? Why he would say you were '*sadly* English.' I have philosophy, you see, as well as nature, on my side; so pray *do* let me laugh, and allow yourselves to laugh along with me."

Maria, thanks to her courage, kept her ground, among her fashionable associates; and she became, at last, not so much vulgar, as odd; but Maria knew that men of fashion have as great an objection to odd

girls, as to vulgar ones. "I see, plainly," said she, "that I shall never be able to marry among them: but some fool or other, with money, who is out of the set, will think it a fine thing to take me, because I am in it; that is all I can expect, after all my *battling* for a place among them. Isabel, you have a better chance than I have, you are so much more quiet."

Maria was right. Her sister Isabel possessed a natural timidity which made her more fitted for the impress for English mannerism. Though not called beautiful, few could see her without feeling her to be so. Her acquirements did not bear quite so professional a stamp as those of her sister, but there was more taste evinced in the manifestion of them. Her conversation was quiet, but interesting — animated, without being positivcly gay; graceful, and slightly dashed with romance. Indeed, she was altogether better suited than her sister to have succeeded among the "high English." But then, Isabel Wilmot had no money; and beauty, and

elegance, and accomplishments are such drugs in London! Besides, she had some strange and peculiar ways of thinking, which checked her success in life. She never could be induced to imitate her sister's "Bold strokes for a Husband;" and would even venture to remonstrate with her on such open love-making to the men.

"My dear, do not talk nonsense," her mother would say; "your sister must do as others do—as all your acquaintances either have done, are doing, or will do. Men will not make love, now-a-days; they must, therefore, be made love to;—one of your curls is out of place, my love."

And here Maria would chime in—"You are so ridiculous, Isabel—wanting to play the violet, forsooth; modest and retired, waiting to be sought for; prettily indifferent whether a hand come to cull you or not; but this might have been very right a century ago, my good child;—when the men would woo, it was perhaps right that women

should wait to be wooed; but "*autres temps, autres mœurs, ma belle,*"—you violet young ladies may now remain till you wither, before any one comes to pluck you;—the men of the present day expect *us* to court *them.*"

"Truly! a fitting expectation," Isabel would rejoin: 'so while they repose in their dignity, like the Eastern gentleman on his couch, we are to play the part of Bayaderes, and after we have danced and sung like Terpischores and Syrens; after we have exhausted all our little wiles and graces, to charm their apathy, we are to think ourselves repaid, if we win a smile in return, from their high mightinesses. That I will never do—never"—she would add, earnestly.

"Don't be so emphatic about nothing at all, my dear, 'tis extreme '*mauvais ton,*'" her mother would answer. "You need not marry at all, you know, if you don't choose it; but all I wish to observe is, that if you *do* intend marrying, and marrying in a certain rank, you must not expect the men to look after *you.*"

Now, Lady Anne had brought up her daughters to consider a single life as any thing rather than a life of "blessedness;" but though Isabel shivered at the thought of being an old maid, she also shrunk at the idea of running after the men, though daily exhorted to it by her dear mama's precepts, and her sister's example. She was too worldly-minded to be perfectly high-minded; and too high-minded to be perfectly worldly; so she halted between two sets of feelings and opinions;—a marrying girl—and yet a dignified one. She had both a head and a heart, and yet she aimed to establish herself among "the certain set," who, as it is proverbially said, do not care or pretend to either. She felt chilled by their coldness, taught by their hollowness, wearied by their apathy; but then, rank, fashion, fortune, floated as a bright vision before her eyes; and, like many other girls, she thought it possible, some day or other, to reconcile her ambition with her affections. In fact,

she was incapable of sacrificing her feelings to her interests; but she determined never to indulge the one at the expense of the other. While in this state of vacillation, her father was obliged, in consequence of having been robbed by his local agents, to return with his family from London to Ireland, where they had been remaining now nearly two years in a solitude (comparatively speaking), very little to the taste of either of the sisters. Isabel would not listen to the soft speeches of any of her country neighbours, or haply she might have heard "something to her advantage." Amongst others, a certain Mr. Mc Alpine was deeply smitten with her;—of him more anon. But though the gentlemen thought her very handsome, they also thought she gave herself rather too many airs; as for the ladies, they of course abominated her; for it is allowed to a woman, by women, to be either pretty or clever,; but, to be both together

is unpardonable; and they, therefore, liked Maria better than Isabel, because the men did not.

Still, "though devilish ugly," according to the phraseology of her Irish male friends, Maria Wilmot was a "devilish" pleasant, off-hand girl; no London airs, like the beauty; no stuff and nonsense about her, but the truth of a good-humoured, rattling girl, "who said every thing that came uppermost."

Dear gentlemen! you were never more mistaken in your lives. Maria Wilmot, with all her apparent *abandon*, never said any thing for which she had not a motive. You imagined that one who incessantly talked and laughed could "have had no harm in her"—that is to say, no design upon you; and all the ill-natured things she said of her fellow-women, and all the forward ones she said to yourselves, were, therefore, set down by you to mere spirits and giddiness.

Maria, in truth, scarce ever lost presence of mind. She was cased in armour of brass, nothing touched or disconcerted her; and surely, if possession be eleven points in the law of the land, impudence is eleven points in the game of life; indeed, it is a gift as valuable as talent in man, or as beauty in woman, for it makes its possessor independent of either. We have enlarged somewhat on this point of Maria's indiosyncracy, inasmuch as without perfect knowledge of her distinguishing characteristic, the reader might be unable fully to comprehend her future proceedings.

CHAPTER III.

On, or about the day that Lord Warringdon left London on his way to Wilmot castle, Lady Anne and her daughters were sitting in the breakfast-room of the afore-named edifice, reading, and occasionally amusing themselves by watching the rain, which poured in torrents outside the windows and even penetrated a little on their inside. Wilmot castle, originally a shooting-lodge, had only recently become (for certain cogent reasons which we do not choose to mention, but which the sheriff of its county town

could guess at,) the family residence. Towers of various heights and forms, and of different orders of architecture, classic, gothic, and oriental, according to the suggestion of each successive adviser of the family, were heaped together with the coolest disregard of the suitable, the convenient, or even of the comfortable.

"What a day!" exclaimed Maria, yawning—"I wonder will my papa bring in any people from the assizes?"

"I'm sure," observed Isabel, "it is as well to be without any, as to have such creatures as he is likely to bring."

"My dear, I make it a rule," returned Maria, "to be satisfied, wherever I am, with the best the country produces, whether as regards eatables, wearables, or *flirtables*. You can't gather 'grapes of thorns,' or figs of thistles:' and because I can't get pine-apples, I will not sit down and starve, if there are plenty even of good potatoes within my reach."

"That's what I call sound philosophy, Maria."

"Excellent! for its sound sense," agreed Lady Anne, looking off her book for a moment, to commend her elder daughter's rationality.

"I assure you, Isabel," continued Maria, "if it were only to keep your hand *in*, you would do well to flirt a little now and then, with whatever God sends: 'why don't you take pattern by Miss Maria?' as old nurse says, 'you see what elegant divarsion she makes for herself, not all as one, as Miss Isabel.'"

"That's all very well for nurse to say, but—"

"But," interrupted Maria, laughing, "not very well for me to do; is that it, sentimental Isabel? For my part, I think flirting not only an agreeable, but a very salutary, pastime. A good flirting bout adds at least, ten years to *my* life. I re-

member when you were a pretty good hand at it, yourself, Isabel."

"So do I, too," replied Isabel smiling, "but not with such men as you are talking about—I could not flirt with a man I did not like."

"I could, then; aye, and not only flirt with him, but—marry him."

"Well!" replied Isabel, "I can much better understand a woman's marrying a man she dislikes, than flirting with one she dislikes."

"Upon what principle?" asked Maria.

"Upon the principle that a man might with great calmness suffer a rope to be placed round his neck, although he will hardly laugh, and jest, and bandy witty sayings with the hangman."

"Bravo, bravo!" exclaimed Maria, laughing, "a husband compared to a hangman! *c'est unique ma, chére*—but there's Paudeen, I vow! and I dare say he brings a letter from my father."

And she started off to the hall-door to watch Paudeen, puffing and blowing, as he ascended the hill leading to the Castle. Little Paudeen was one of the *corps de reserve* composed of errand boys, and idling boys, who seemed just born into the world for no other purpose then to supply, by their little bare legs, the occasional lapses of memory of the Castle Wilmot household.

"Murdher! we forgot to send for the salt! The beef will be spoilt intirely, for want of the salt! Where in the world is Paudeen? Till I'd make him step across the mountain for the salt."

But Paudeen would have been despatched the night before "for the tay, that was forgot to be sint for, the same time as the sugar." And one of Pandeen's compeers would be packed off for the salt. And so, Paudeen was now returning, after performing some confidential mission of this nature, from the assize town.

"How are you, Paudeen?" said Maria, finely.

"I thank your honour, Miss:" replied Paudeen, pulling out a lock of his hair, in his eagerness to make his best bow. He would have pulled off his hat if he had had one.

"Well, Paudeen, did you see the master?"—

"I did, plaze your honour:" replied the hatless, shoeless page of Castle Wilmot.

"And when is he coming?" continued Maria.

"The day after to-morrow, he will be here, Miss:" rejoined Paudeen.

"And do you know what prevented his coming yesterday?"

"Waiting for the gintleman, I b'lieve, Miss."

"What gentleman?" asked Maria, briskly.

"The gintleman from England, Miss."

"What has a gentleman from England

to do with the master's coming home, Paudeen?"

"Sure it has every thing to do with it, wherin the gintleman is coming along with himself—came all the ways from England, a purpose to ax the masther's lave to be made a mimber of, Miss."

"Can it be Lord Warringdon, I wonder?" said Maria, thinking aloud.

"That's the name, Miss—you have it, and you got the Masther's letter, didn't you, Miss, where he tould you all about it?"

"No," answered Maria, "we got no letter."

"Faith, and he sent it, Miss, for all that, by a brother of Pat Murphy's; but 'tis my opinion, Miss, he got drunk and lost the letter; 'case you know, Miss, he loves a dhrop. So, Miss, you didn't get the bad places on the road mended, nor any thing ready, Miss? To be sure what a villian he is! the masther will be mad, and no blame to him!"

Maria returned hastily to the apartment where she had left her mother and sister. "Good people," said she, "I am the bearer of important tidings—our solitude is about to be broken in upon by no less a personage than Viscount Warringdon."

"Nonsense, Maria!" exclaimed her sister.

"Truth, Isabel."

"Who says so?" demanded Lady Anne.

"I have it on indisputable authority—that of Paudeen, who has just returned from the scene of action—where he left my father awaiting the noble Viscount's arrival."

"Very extraordinary that your father should not have mentioned this sooner!" replied Lady Anne.

"It appears that he has, in a letter, but that the letter has been lost."

"I am afraid there is not a single thing in the house fit for the reception of such a person as Lord Warringdon—do ring the bell, I must only do the best I can."

Pat Murphy answered the summons, and a few minutes afterwards his voice was heard in the servants' hall, calling out in a hasty manner, "send up Jim Flanagan to my lady."

"What for?" asked Mrs. Mc Donogh.

"Never you mind;" was the surly rejoinder.

"Never you mind, to me! you baste! How dare you say never mind, to me?"

"I say it agin, then," rejoined Pat, "and I'd say it to the King of England, or the Pope, if he was in it, or the masther himself, when such conthrary things happen."

"Oh then I'll tell you one thing, my man; and mind what I say, don't be shewing your ill-manners to your masther's nurse, whomsoever you may be impident too, for that would be a worse day for you than ever your worst inemy wished to you."

Pat seemed to suspect as much, for he made no answer to this denunciation, but

turned round on the crowd who stood gaping and listening to the dialogue.

"Why the devil don't ye send up Jim when I bid you?"

"And how the divil could we, when he isn't in it?"

"Tunder and ages! then, where is he?"—

"Gone home to be sure, where else would he be?"

"The curse o' Cromwell on him!" piously exclaimed Pat. "I never knew him betther than to be always *in* the way, or always *out* of it—Meehelleen, where are *you?*"

"Here!" exclaimed a little sharp voice.

"Meehelleen, *Ma vourneen*, you must go by the first light in the morning for Jim, and bid him come here if he's alive, by eight o'clock afore breakfast; or, wait! may be 'tis as well at once to tell him what he is wanting for; 'twill save time; so bid him take a couple o' score of min to

the road, to mend the bad places—do you mind?"

"I do:" replied Meehelleen half asleep.

"Bad luck to them scoundrels on the grand jury, that's always traversing the masther's presintments," charitably observed one of the *attachés* of the kitchen.

"You are a fool for that wish," responded Pat—"may be if the roads were betther we'd have some company thravelling on them that mightn't be so convanient."

"A then, Pat," said a rosy-faced laundry maid, suspected of possessing more influence over Pat's surly humour than he cared to acknowledge—"A then, tell us, an' God bless you, who's expicted?"

"The devil and his mother!" was the lover-like answer.

"The Lord save us! don't bite our heads off, any how. The cat may look at the king—any one may ax a question, I hope."

"Well then, indeed, Peggy," remarked Mrs. Mc Donogh—"I think you might as

well wait till your betthers were sarved, before you put your spoon in the dish; more especially when the discoorse is of family concarns; and when *I can't* get an answer, 'tis not the likes of you that will; but, indeed, I desarve no betther, when I demane myself to join such company."

In hopes, however, that Pat would, sooner or later, make the *amende honorable*, and communicate the desired information, Mrs. Mc Donogh retained her seat, and suspended her dignity for a season.

Indeed, like many other people of importance, she found grandeur a troublesome every-day appendage, and was not sorry to exchange, sometimes, the stiffness of housekeeper-room etiquette for the more sociable conversation of the servants' hall.

A few moment's reflection had convinced Pat of the impropriety of answering so important a personage as Mrs. Mc Donogh with the disrepect of which he had been guilty; and, after two or three muttered

curses on the absent Jim Flanagan, he re-addressed the good lady thus:

"Well, ma'am; if I said any thing out of the way, I ax your pardon: you know, yourself, I wouldn't be the one to displase the masther's dog, let alone his nurse. Sure, if I didn't love him, and all belonging to him, as I do, and if I wouldn't go to the hottest place in the other world for them, I needn't mind who comes or who laves the house. There's Tom Sassenach, for you, who's always as mild as a girl the day of her wedding. He takes the world asy. The masther saved him from being thransported, in London, and, for all that, he wouldn't help us to bate the process-server, because, indeed, he might take the law of him, for an assault upon the king's highway. God help his poor bothered English head, 'tisn't on the king's highway, at all, man,' says I, for 'twas up a' *Boreen* we caught the fellow, Mrs. Mc Donough, but a devil a one of Tom would lift a stick:

and I'm not all's one as that mane-spirited cratur. I'd lose the last dhrop of my blood for the masther; and, you know, ma'am, that many's the time I have done what one sthroke more would have made murder of, to keep off them blood-thirsty-Orangemen of process-servers."

Pat's audience, much as they desired this exordium shortened, did not venture on imitating the means resorted to by impatient members of the Lower House, when they wish to curtail long-winded *exposés*. Pat was neither *questioned* nor *coughed down*, but suffered to say his say.—The Irish are naturally a courteous people. When it was evident he had finished, and not till then, a buzz of approbation, and of approbation only, met his ear. "True, for you, Pat, there never lived a better sarvant to a good masther, than yourself,—divil a better."

Now, in the Irish vocabulary, a good servant does not always mean the same as in the English one. In fact, a good servant, on

the other side of the water, sometimes signifies an individual who may be troublesome, drunken, and negligent, even disrespectful, but who would stand up for his master's dignity, and defend his person at the peril of his own neck; very useful qualifications, it may be added, in a country, where, now and then, its gentry owe their personal liberty to their inaccessible roads and a devoted tenantry.

"At the same time," continued Pat, "that I would lay down my life for the masther, and why wouldn't I? He saved my father, in the rebellion, from dying, as none of his name ever did before him, or will afther him, if it wouldn't be myself, that might give one of the lads, with papers, a taste more of the stick than he could convanient-ly carry. But for all that, and well as I love him, by the powers! he sometimes makes me mad with him. Nothing must do him, but to write to ax that lord from

England, that's coming to canvass the county."

Many and various were the exclamations that now rose in every variety of Irish intonation, from servants' hall and kitchen.

"Blessed Virgin, purtect us!" exclaimed Mrs. Mc Donough, "sure it's joking you are, Pat? a gintleman from England!"

"Bad cess to them villains of turkeys," cried the cook; "there isn't one of them fit to kill! I have been breaking my heart, this fortnight past, sthriving to fatten 'em, and can't, God help me!"

"Devil a thing to ate or dhrink in the house, this blessed night!" groaned the groom. I never knew the aqual of the masther, for doin' things hand over head, without so much as telling one before he does 'em."

"That he may brake his neck, I pray God, for all the throuble he is giving us," piously aspirated the housemaid, meaning

the expected stranger, however, not her master.

"What matter, whether he does or not?" interrupted the coachman; "one would think, to hear ye all going on, there never was seen a jintleman in the house afore; what's good enough for the quality of the counthry is good enough for him, I suppose."

"Don't bother us," said Pat; "We know that as well as you can tell us. 'Tisn't that he's better than other quality, but that he's more impudent. Them English is so d——d concated, passing their remarks on Ireland, and making their skit of all they seen, when they go back again."

"Is he young or ould, Pat," enquired the laundry-maid, making a second attempt to extract information from her uncommunicative admirer.

"What the devil does it signify, whether he is, or no?"

"'Tis you that's in the sweet timper to-night, sure enough," retorted his mistress. "It does, then, signify every thing, whether a gintleman coming to the house is young or ould; if he's a young, rich gintleman, who knows what good may be in sthore for one of the young ladies?"

"Oh, then, if he's any good at all, down on my binded knees this night, I pray the saints in heaven, one of the young ladies may get him. How proud I'd be, if he was to purpose for Miss Maria! she's such a darling, hearty, pleasant cratur. I wonder which of 'em it will be?"

"You may spare yourself the throuble of wondhering about it, for he'll take neither of 'em, I can tell you," said Pat. "That's the way with them English always; they'll ate you out of house and home, and then walk off with thimselves, fair and asy. But it's Miss Isabel he'd take, if he took either: she's such a darling, purty young lady."

Here a violent ringing of the parlour bell interrupted the colloquy.

"Hubbaboo!" exclaimed Pat; "I forgot, intirely, to tell ye, my lady wants Winny directly;—skelp off this minute, like a lamp-lighter."

Winny was not very slow in obeying the summons, in hopes of learning all the particulars concerning the alarming visit.

"Winny, my good girl," said Lady Anne, "you must get the best room ready against the day after to-morrow, for a gentleman the master has asked here."

"Ah, then, mee Lady, sure it isn't here he'll sleep."

"Why, Winny, where can he sleep but here?"

"Faicks, mee Lady, there's no sheets to put on the bed."

"No sheets! how do you mean?"

"The masther, mee Lady, that ordered widow Fahy's cow into the shrubbery, beyant, and myself didn't know the conthrari-

ness of her, becase, mee lady, she's only a short time in the place, — widow Fahy bought her of a man in the lower parish, so I left themselves and herself together, mee lady."

"You left what together?" said Lady Anne. "I don't understand what you're talking about."

"The sheets and the cow, mee Lady."

"Oh, very well, go on," said Lady Anne.

"Well, mee lady, I wint in to my dinner not thinking any harim would happen my sheets, or I would have made my little sister stop with them; and when I come back, to look to see were they dhry, sorrow of a tatther of a sheet did I see, but a rag sticking out of her mouth."

"Out of your sister's mouth?" asked Lady Anne, who, not having been Irish bred and born, was seldom able to follow the entanglements of an Irish sentence.

"Not at all, mee lady; my little sisther wasn't in it, more is the pity. No! but sticking out of the cow's mouth it was; mee lady, the sight left my eyes when I seen it, and a wakeness came over me at the start I got."

"The upshot of it is," said Maria, "the cow has eaten the sheets; isn't that it, Winney?"

"It is, Miss: but, sure it isn't the sheets, itself, that's the worst of it. We could borry a pair of sheets from Mrs. Molony, who's always a good warrant to lend, only for the curtains being spoilt, too."

"What! did the cow eat the curtains, too?"

"No, mee Lady, but Father John's brother!"

"Eat *them?*" exclaimed Lady Anne.

"No, mee lady, tore 'em."

"How could he tear them?"

"Father John's brother, mee lady, that was at a wedding, Saturday was a week,

and he come here becase 'twas late for himself and his baste to be crossing the bogs."

"What has this to do with the curtains being torn?" interrupted Lady Anne.

"Sure, my lady, it has every thing to do with it, seeing he was pleasant at the same time."

"What does she mean to say?" asked Lady Anne, turning to Maria, who was enjoying the dialogue between the Irish servant and English mistress, and thought it much too pretty a one to be inclined to spoil it by a little explanation.

"I wish, Maria, you would not stand laughing there, but help me to understand this girl. "What on earth a man's being pleasant can have to do with tearing curtains, I can't imagine."

"But sure, I mane he was not himself, you know."

Lady Anne still looked puzzled.

"He tuk a sup, I mane; you under-

stand, don't you, Miss?" continued Winny, curtsying to Maria.

"To be sure I do, Winny; do you think I was born in Ireland for nothing?"

Maria was particularly anxious to stand well with the lower order, and have their good word; besides, she was, indeed, constitutionally good humoured, and never ill-natured, except when it was her interest to be so.

"Ah," thought Winny, "Miss Maria has more sinse in her little finger, than my lady in her whole carcase. Well, Miss, to make a long story short, right or wrong, he wanted more liquor, and troth we were afeared to give him any more. He axed the masther then, himself, and when the masther wouldn't give it to him either, he went mad intirely. Then the masther come down to see who it was was making sich a noise in the house, and when he seen who it was, he bid Pat Murphy and Paudeen carry him up to bed, and when he wasn't plazed with the recep-

tion he got, sure he tore the curtains in ribbons, and broke the bed, and destroyed the room intirely, Miss. I never seen him so pleasant, as he was that same night."

"Yes, but, Winny, that has nothing to do with the best room, you know:" observed Maria.

"Avoch, Miss, sure its of the best room I am talking. Sure its the best room he ruint this ways: sorrow may care what capers he cut any where else but there, sure that what's killing me, Miss;" continued Winny, dolefully.

"And pray," interrupted Lady Anne, in displeasure, "what possessed you to put a drunken man into the best room?"

"God sees and knows, it wasn't my fault, mee lady, but the masther's, that tould me take care, for my life, would I put him where your honour's ladyship could hear him bawlling, and roaring, and going on, for fear you wouldn't be plazed with the noise he was making, mee lady; and I had no

place to put him in out of the way, but the best room. Myself, and Paudeen, and Pat Murphy, and all the other girls in the house, mee lady, were striving an hour and more by the clock, to get him up the garrot stairs, but it failed us; he kept kicking, and prancing, and biting like mad—sich other going on, I never seen, for all I'm used to men in liquor. So I went to tell the masther it failed us to get him up the garret stair —an' the masther, he bid me put him in the best room. 'Faith, sir,' says I 'I'm afeard my lady will be mad.' 'No she won't,' said he, 'do as I bid you.' Troth, my lady, I'd be very sorry to do it at any other bidding but his own."

Just at this moment a doleful exclamation from the group that had gathered round the half-opened door, attracted Maria's attention.

"Arah, Pat dear! How will this be at all? My lady will go mad intirely, and no blame to her, in regard of the spoons."

on to your ladyship about it? Faith, I'd be very sorry to be decaving you my lady, in regard of a blackguard of his kind. Barney Sullivan is no such great frind of mine, as that I'd be telling lies to screen him from his desarvings."

"Was ever any thing like this!" exclaimed Isabel, for the first time taking a part in the conversation—she had hitherto sat silent and provoked.

"Yes," answered Maria, "there have been fifty things just like it—one would imagine you were still in Grovesnor Square, where there are no cows to eat sheets, nor Barney Sullivans to steal spoons."

"We shall be disgraced, I see clearly:" said lady Anne, in a desponding tone. "Even with the best appointed establishment, we should hardly escape the criticism of a young English gentleman of fashion: but such a castle Rack-Rent as this, would make us the ridicule of any one —and he is to be here the day after to-

morrow! I really do not know which way to turn."

"We had better give out we have got the typhus fever in the house, and that we must relinquish the pleasure of his company;" said Maria—"but come, mamma, let you and Isabel take yourselves off, and I will overlook the domestic economy and settle it all capitally, you shall see.

After the door had closed on them, Maria began a review of the cellar. "The champagne is gone long ago I know, but there's some madeira, and—"

"Madeira! Miss Maria, sorrow a dhrop in the place as mush as would blind your eye: the last dozen was drank the day before the masther left home:" replied Pat.

"Bad enough;" remarked Maria, "still we have the Burgundy, you know."

"Ah, then where, Miss?" enquired Pat.

"In the cellar I suppose:" answered Maria.

"Faicks and you have not, Miss, Mr. O'Higgerty got the last of it, when he gave the grand dinner to the army, last week."

"Hermitage, Frontignac, Hock, Vin de Grave, are none of them forthcoming?"

"No!"

"What does remain then?"

"Faith, Miss, it won't take long to say that—only a dozen of port, and half-a-dozen of sherry!" and such was the comfortable announcement of the state of the cellar.

"And what's to be done about the dinner, Miss?" enquired the terrified cook. Me, that has neither duck, nor chicken, nor turkey fit to kill. I never seen such schamers of poulthry! the world wouldn't fatten 'em—just as if they done it a purpose, out of contrariness. May our blessed mother look down upon me this night, in my thruble!"

Maria's courage began to ooze out, but, however, she put a good face on the matter, and after a little consultation and

recollection, the affair was arranged more creditably for the Wilmot pride than could at one time have been expected. Borrowing parties were sent out, in all directions, to repair the various wants and losses already enumerated, and, by the eventful day, Maria had the satisfaction of seeing that every thing was tolerably right and proper. Lady Anne resumed her bland smiles, and Isabel began to breathe freely once more; and in this pleasing state of mind we will leave them, and return to our friend Lord Warringdon, who has just arrived at, ——— and early in the morning is preparing to start for Wilmot Castle accompanied by Mr. Wilmot himself.

CHAPTER IV.

THE road to Wilmot Castle, never very good, was now, owing to the late rains, nearly impassable; and Mr. Wilmot, although he had issued strict orders to "little Paudeen" to bid Pat Murphy tell Jim Flanagan to give "a touch of mending" to the bad places, entertained certain misgivings as to the manner in which the said orders would be executed by the said Jim Flanagan; even should the said Paudeen not have forgotten to tell the said Pat Murphy to tell the said Jim.

"I am devilishly afraid, Kelly," he said to his man, as he was stepping into bed, the evening before they were to start; "that Lord Warrington's nice, London-built carriage will break down on the road to Wilmot castle."

"Faith, sir, I wouldn't be surprised if it did."

"Had I not better tell him to leave it here, then? Costella will take care of it;—what do you think, Kelly?"

"Faith, sir, if you take my advice, you will say nothing about it, but leave it all to God. May be, it won't break down at all, sir; and if it does, we must only pretend to be greatly surprised on account of how bad the road is grown; or, suppose we lay the blame on the dhriver; that will do betther. Jim is to dhrive us (he is a tinant of your own, sir, from the other side o' the county); and he won't mind, a ha'parth, getting the blame instead of your road, sir; and we can make it up to him some other way, sir;

it would sound so quare, sir, to be telling a sthrange gentleman, just come to the counthry, that one hasn't a road fit for him to thravel on, sir."

"By Jove, Kelly, I believe you are right," replied the master; "no use exposing the nakedness of the land, if we can help it; and, as you say, may be, we shan't break down; and, if we do, you can give Jim half a guinea to take the blame on himself, poor devil!"

So Mr. Wilmot did not apprise his noble guest of the more than probable doom of his highly-finished, London-built carriage.

"Where is the post-boy?" asked Lord Warringdon, of a tatterdemalion figure near him.

"Is it the dhriver you are axin' about, sir,—my lord, I mane?" also asked, instead of answering (for he *was* Irish) the person addressed; and he respectfully took off a hat that had, we suppose, once been good and shaped like other hats, but that now

bore evidence of hard service;—"an', sure, I'm the boy you want, my lord."

His lordship showed some surprise at this piece of information; but Jim, though interpreting the surprise to be created by his own un-post-boy like appearance, affected to take it quite the other way.

"Faith! it's mysel', and nobody else, that's to be your dhriver, my lord; did ye think, sir,—my lord, I mane,—that my masther, Misther Costelloe, would put you off wid any one but mysel'? Faith, my lord, he would be very sorry to do such a thing as that; 'tis me that always dhrives the lords and mimbers of parliament; for Misther Costelloe wouldn't let me dhrive any of the commonalty, at all, good or bad, but keeps me for the grand quality intirely, such as your lordship's honour, or Mr. Wilmot; yes, indeed, I'm his grandee dhriver, my lord." And Jim closed his harangue by giving a chuck to his femoral habiliments and a knowing look at Mike Kelly.

"So, then," said Lord Warringdon, laughing, aye, English and exclusive as he was, actually laughing at the singularly unaristocratic appearance of the 'grandee dhriver.' "So, then, I am to consider it quite a compliment to have you for a coachman?"

"Oh! not to say intirely a compliment, my lord," repied Jim, twirling between finger and thumb the before-mentioned hat, and smiling and looking modest.

"Not entirely?" asked Lord Warringdon; "only almost, Jim, is that it?"

"I b'lieve this is the way it is;—a grand gintleman, like you, my lord, would not like, may be, to be behoulden to the likes of me, for a compliment; so your honour's lordship can make me any compliment you plaise, when we're parting, by and bye."

"Very well," answered Lord Warringdon, still amused at Jim's way of arranging the punctilio of obligation,—"you pay me the compliment of driving me, and I

pay you a compliment of another kind, equal in value."

"Long life to your lordship's honour," cried Jim; "that's it, exactly;" and off he walked to "give a touch" to the harness.

"Jim, are those horses good?" enquired his lordship.

"Is it *my* bastes your honour's asking about? to be sure they are; don't you see 'em, my Lord?" assuming a look of extreme surprise.

"I *do* see them, Jim," replied the English lord, laughing with all the *bonhommie* of a candidate for the "sweet voices" of an Irish county; "and because I see they don't look good, I want to know from you if they really are."

"Looks are decaiteful, my lord, sometimes; them, now, are quality bastes, for all they don't seem so; the raal quality I mane, that has no concate about 'em, like your honour, for all the world; barring they don't look so like quality-bastes as

your honour's lordship does like a quality gintleman. But 'tisn't every one, you know, my lord, that has the chance to be born grand and iligant, and clever-looking," glancing, with a smile half shy, half servile, at the really distinguished figure of Lord Warringdon.

Now, although the noble Viscount had read in so many bright eyes, and had even heard from so many beautiful lips, that he was one of the most *distingué* men that the owners of the said eyes and lips had ever seen, he was not so *blasé*, with respect to compliments on his personal appearance, as to hear with unconcern the impression he had made upon a ragged Irish post-boy; so he enquired no more into the merits of Jem's "bastes," but, still laughing, jumped into the carriage.

"Curious people, these Irish fellows," he observed to Mr. Wilmot, who was already seated, "how well the rogue turned off my enquiries about his horses! you could

furnish all Europe with diplomatists as well as soldiers."

"Very right; we are, indeed, a most devilishly troublesome set of fellows; a nation of soldiers and cabinet ministers *en brut*, but not so difficult to manage, after all, if any one would take the trouble of trying; talk and laugh with our lower orders, and you win them at once; and, since you start on this plan, I predict that your lordship will make a successful canvass; you have already, I see, made a conquest of Jim," he added, smiling: "but what are we waiting for? Kelly! bid him drive on, and pretty fast, too, or we shall be late on the road; recollect we have five-and-thirty miles to go; you will excuse my taking the master on me," said he, turning to his companion; "for the miles are Irish ones, too."

"Take care, for your life, would you dhrive fast, Jim," said Kelly, as he mounted one of his master's horses, the other having

been given to Lord Warringdon's gentleman-in-waiting — "Never mind what the masther says, Jim; dhrive asy, and God bless you, or you'll smash us to atoms."

"A-thin, Mr. Kelly, one would think, to hear you, you thought you were spaking to an ignoramus; sure it isn't the first time I wint his honour's roads, nor won't be the last, either, plase God! Troth, I've a right to know 'em by this time, as well as the nose in my face. I wouldn't dhrive hard, if you'd give my weight in goold, since the time I dhruv the officer's ladies up to Misther Mc Alpine's. They never gave me pace or ase till I wint smart; well, I done as I was bid; and, by my conscience, *if* I did, sure I smashed my pole."

"Murdher! smashed your pole! and spilt the ladies on the road, Jim?"

"Troth an' I didn't, Mr. Kelly."

"A-thin, what did ye do with them, then, Jim?"

"Dhruv 'em without a taste of a pole, good or bad."

"You did, Jim?"

"I did, in troth."

"A-thin, tell us how, and God bless ye."

"Ah! a way of my own, I have," replied Jim, looking very knowing, "An' *I* wouldn't tell id to any body, 'case I'd lose my custom, intirely, for dhriving through desperate places; there's no'er a boy at Mr. Castelloe's but mysel' that can go that road, and come back alive; so I get all the jobs on id; and they're the best to be had any where—always worth three half-crowns more to me than any o' the others. So, Mr. Kelly, I'll do my endavors not to smash the vahacle; but if I have that bad luck, I'll do as you bid me, purtend 'twas all my own fault, or lay the blame on my poor bastes. Troth, the young Lord wasn't out in regard of 'em; they're miserable looking craturs, sure enough; they were the worst I could find in the stable; so 'twill be quite asy to

make him think, if he sticks in a bog-hole, 'tis all their doin's, to say nothing of the dhriver"—he added, smiling roguishly.

At length they drove off, followed by the blessings of the crowd at the inn-door, in exchange for some more substantial tokens of good will on the part of the new candidate, and of that of their old and popular representative. The road lay through a wild country, with scarcely a trace of human habitation. For the first few miles they whirled along tolerably well, and Jim looked behind, every now and then, with a smile of triumph. As they proceeded, however, the jolting became "rather disagreeable." A little further on, "very disagreeable,"—and at last Lord Warringdon exclaimed at it, "as damnably disagreeable."

"Jim!" he cried "drive more carefully, you are shaking me to death!"

"Shaking you to death! my God, am I, my Lord? think o' that. I'll drive asy—that was just a bad spot that I didn't know

was in id, my Lord; an' I wondher how it came in id; for this road gets the applause from all the roads in Ireland, for its goodness, my Lord—'tis as smooth as butthermilk, mostly."

"It is any thing but that, now," muttered his Lordship.

Jolt after jolt came, and each time the veracious Jim assured his Lordship that "'twas the last bad spot" on this best road in Ireland.

"The devil himself must have possessed me, when I first thought of coming into this infernal country," said the wretched candidate to himself, as he looked on the dreary waste around, and felt the rocks under him. "And I dare not complain—but must grin with delight all the time I am becoming pounded into a jelly!"

"Poor devil, I pity him, really I do, upon my soul!" murmured Wilmot, as he looked on the compressed lips and contracted brows of his young companion, which bore

evidence alike to the extremity of his suffering, and the heroism of his endurance.—"This road is really very bad," said he, with the tone of a man surprised at the discovery of a certain quality never before suspected to exist in an admired object—"I am afraid you are sadly shaken, my dear Lord?"

"A little," replied the Viscount, endeavouring to suppress a groan—"Oh it is nothing at all; a mere trifle. How far are we from Castle Wilmot now?"

"Not yet quite half-way," answered Mr. Wilmot.

"My God! I shall never get alive there," sighed his unfortunate companion to himself.

Mr. Wilmot did his best to beguile the tedium, and, alas! tortures, of the journey, by telling amusing anecdotes of the gentry and peasantry in his neighbourhood. Nay, he took more interesting ground, and counted up the best interests, and enlarged

on the best way of conciliating them; in fact, laboured to combine instruction and entertainment in his discourse. And Lord Warringden tried all that man could try, to laugh at his host's capital stories. He knew that, both for the sake of the jester, and for the intrinsic value of the jest, if he had a laugh in him, he should bestow it on the present occasion; but the most he could accomplish was a smile; and even that was a miserable attempt, resembling rather the convulsion effected by the galvanic battery, than the graceful indication of pleasure, which usually set off the handsome mouth of the once captivating, but now suffering "exclusive."

All he had hitherto endured, however, was but "the crumpling of the roses" compared with what followed. The concussions became absolutely terrific—a seventy-four running aground might experience something like the joltings and bumpings of our poor carriage, as it swung from side to side;

now ascending to the heavens above, now descending to the depths below—now Mr. Wilmot tumbling over Lord Warringdon, and now, for variety, Lord Warringdon tumbling over Mr. Wilmot.

"What luck we had, sir," said Kelly, putting his head in at the carriage-window, and assuming a guileless, innocent expression of face, which deceived even his master—"What luck we had, to get this vagabone of a Jim to dhrive us—he's as dhrunk as a piper."

"Is he really?" enquired Mr. Wilmot.

"Sure, if he wasn't dhrunk, and as dhrunk as a baste, too," continued he, looking steadily at his master, and glancing with a smile at Lord Warringdon, who sat with his head between his hands, utterly exhausted,—"Sure if he wasn't, he wouldn't be dhriving the way he is; isn't he shaking you to bits? doesn't that shew he must be dhrunk, when any one but himself, the blackguard, would dhrive so asy, you might

thread a needle, going along. I'm afraid you are terribly joulted, my Lord?" added Mr. Kelly, in a commiserating tone.

"I am half dead," faintly articulated his Lordship.

"Upon my conscience," continued Kelly, "I've the greatest mind in the world to dismount, and give that dhrunken baste of a Jim as fine a flogging as he ever got in his life, for his impidence."

"For God's sake do not," cried Lord Warringdon, "or we shall be left on the road all night."

"Won't I my Lord? Oh, very well, I won't if your Lordship doesn't like I'd do it," replied Kelly, affecting submission to Lord Warringdon's request; "but if it wasn't for you, my Lord, upon my word and credit, Jim Naughten would be very little obleeged to himself this mornin', I can tell him that. Jim! you dhrunken baste! how dare you dhrive that way? if it wasn't for Lord Warringdon's begging you

off, I'd bate you while ever I could stand over ye, you villain, ye!"

"Long life to your Lordship!" roared Jim, "long life to your honour's Lordship, Member of Parliament for the county of ——, long life to him; he's a jewel of a boy—huzza! huzza!" and he whirled his hat over his head, playing all the antics beseeming his supposed condition.

Kelly cantered to his side—"I'm proud of ye, Jim; I always knew you were the devil for dhriving—but upon my word and credit, Jim, you flog all ever I seen, for dhriving to-day. Any one but yourself, would have had the carriage in *smithereens* long ago. Faith, Jim, I think you must have a *charum* from the good people for dhriving."

"Oh! Mr. Kelly, you pay me too many compliments entirely, sir," replied Jim, trying to look abashed—"I'm proud to have your applause, but, indeed, it far exceeds my desarvings, Mr. Kelly."

Jim thought no such thing; on the contrary, no praise he ever received came up to his notions of his own merit on a bad road. "How's the masther? I'm afraid he's kilt."

"No, indeed, thank God, he isn't," replied Mr. Kelly; "he's used to it, you know, Jim."

"And the other poor cratur?" demanded Jim.

"Oh—he's bedevilled, intirely."

"A-thin is he? no wondher, troth; God knows mysel' pities him, the cratur!" and here Jim "gave a taste of the whip" to his "bastes," and Mr. Kelly fell back to do the civilities by Mr. Symmons, Lord Warringdon's gentleman; not that Mr. Kelly particularly affected Mr. Symmons, but because Mr. Kelly stood in the light of host to Mr. Symmons, who had hitherto ridden along, silent and disdainful, as if he were the very incarnation of superciliousness; Lord Warringdon's success among the wild

Irish not enough interesting him to induce Mr. Symmons to compromise his own pretensions to *ton*, by condescending to commune with such utter barbarians. At length, however, he broke silence.

"I always thought that people of fortune in Ireland kept their carriages."

"You thought very right, Mr. Symmons," replied Mr. Kelly, with his usual urbanity.

"But, they are not like English ones, you know."

"To be sure they are; what else would they be like?" rejoined the Irishman of cast clothes.

"Why, English carriages are built for English roads; and Irish carriages are contrived, of course, for Irish roads."

"Irish roads!" repeated Kelly, with affected astonishment, but very genuine displeasure—"Irish roads," he continued, resuming his former tone of civility, "are like English ones, I suppose."

"Indeed, I suppose no such thing," replied Mr. Symmons.

"Why, what's the difference?" asked the other.

"Rather an important one," returned Mr. Symmons, sarcastically. "The English roads are proverbially the best in Europe; and the Irish ones, judging by my own experience, are the worst.—As for this, to be candid with you, I never saw any thing like it, my good fellow."

"Well, 'tis something, any how, to see what one never seen before," replied Mr. Kelly, with provoking quietness. "May be you'll be seeing more surprising things than that again, before you lave us."

"Indeed!" rejoined the "exclusive" valet, not condescending, however, to make any enquiries touching these wonders. "Pray when shall we arrive at the next town?"

"There's no town in it," returned his companion, sulkily.

"No town!" exclaimed Mr. Symmons,

much surprised. "Well, village, or whatever you call it—where can I procure a bowl of soup?"

"Cock ye up with your bowl of soup!" muttered the angry Hibernian—"ye impident, concated whelp!"—then he continued aloud—"We don't stop at any place, only to beat the horses." Kelly meant to bait, not to flagellate them, as his occasionally affected fine pronunciation might have led the reader to imagine.

"I shall be starved, man," exclaimed Mr. Symmons; "why the deuce didn't ye tell me this before?"

"Why didn't I tell you what?" enquired Mr. Kelly, composedly.

"Why, that there is nothing to be got to eat in this beg—" he stopped abruptly, catching a glance of the Irishman's eye, which he did not think encouraged his finishing the sentence. "I meant, Mr. Kelly, to ask you why you did not tell me that there was no Inn in this part of the country, and I should

then have put up a few sandwiches, or a cold chicken, or so, just to keep up my strength a little."

"To tell you the thruth, Mr. Symmons, I thought when the masthers done without could chickens, the servants might:" returned Mr. Kelly, with imperturbable composure.

"Confound the fellow's impudence!" muttered Mr. Symmons: "servants and masters, upon my word! there's radicalism and equality with a vengeance. Lord Warringdon," he resumed, aloud, "can fast better than I can—I have a bad digestion, and have been ordered by my physician to eat frequently and at regular hours."

"The ape! I wish to the Lord I had lave of the masther to give him something of my own cooking, to help his digestion."

A silence of some moments ensued, which was broken a second time by Mr. Symmons.

"Pray, when shall we come to your master's estate?"

"My masther's estate!" cried Mr. Kelly, "sure what else have you been thravelling through, all day? and havn't half gone over it yet;" he added, with all the pride of an Irish follower.

"Humph! so all this bog," cried Mr. Symmons, laying somewhat offensive emphasis on the last word, "all this bog, then, is the Wilmot estate—" and something very like a sneer played round Mr. Symmons' mouth.

"Yes," replied Mr. Kelly, very wrathful, "all this bog, and some more bogs besides, and a great dale that isn't bog, belongs to Misther Wilmot of Wilmot Castle—the first intherest in the county, and the largest property in the province—upon my conscience!" he muttered in a lower key—"I never had so much throuble in my life to keep my hands off a concated ass of his kind, than I have this blessed minute, not just to

take and chuck him, far and asy, into the middle of that same bog he's passing his remark upon, so mighty busy!"

"I cannot imagine," proceeded Mr. Symmons, "where all your voters come from —I have not seen a house yet, nor a tree, nor any thing giving one the idea of human habitation. You know the capital stories we have in England about Irish voters?" he went on facetiously — "shall I tell you one of them?"

"I'd advise ye not:" answered Kelly, speaking very quietly, but looking as if he were just in the humour to enforce his recommendation if necessary by some argument more cogent than words.

Just then, luckily perhaps, for Mr. Symmons' bones, Mr. Kelly's attention was attracted towards Jim, whose cries of "Hee-up! hee-up!" resounded in every note of the Irish scale of intonation; and then Jim chirped, coaxed, and cursed, talked, exhorted, and flogged; did every

thing in his power, in fact, by reason and coercion, to induce his horses to get out of the bog-hole, into which they had sunk up to their shoulders; but, alas! the harder he flogged, the deeper they floundered—he was at his wits' end.

"What's the matter, Jim?" enquired Kelly, who had seen the confusion, while engaged in his amiable colloquy with Mr. Symmons, and had hastened to learn the cause. "What's the matter, Jim?" he repeated.

"Oh! my God!" returned Jim, impatiently—"havn't ye eyes in your head, man? don't ye see what's the matther? I'm bogged, and, more be token, 'twas in this very same place I smashed my pole in, last year: 'the curse of the cross upon it!'"

"Give 'em a taste of the whip, Jim."

"Give 'em a taste of the divil! A-thin, Mr. Kelly, will ye jist throw a look at the craturs, and see the condition they are in—up to their shoulders in bog! What's this

for, at all?" roared Jim, tearing his hair in desperation and flinging his hat on the ground—"What in the world will I do? Mr. Kelly—God bless you! and tell me what's to become of us, at all!"

"What are you stoppiug for?" cried Mr. Wilmot from one window. "Has any accident happened the carriage?" cried Lord Warringdon, from the other.

"No sir—no my lord:" replied the veracious worthies addressed—"nothing at all, only a bit o' the harness that wint wrong."

"Mr. Kelly—" re-demanded Jim, half-crying, "what will I do at all?"

Mr. Kelly mused a second; then mounted the coach-box—surveyed the country in all directions; and his face suddenly brightened—"Now we have it!" he exclaimed, joyfully—and placing his bent fingers in his mouth, whistled shrilly and long. Almost immediately, figures were discernible, moving along the brow of a hill, that skirted the road—and in less than five

minutes, fifty or sixty stout fellows came jumping and hollowing across the bog.

"Glory be to the Lord, for all his mercies this day!" sighed Jim, making the sign of the cross.

"We are going to be robbed and murdered:" thought Mr. Symmons — "these Irish monsters are capable of any atrocity;" and he was preparing to save himself from the ferocious Mountaineers, by clapping spurs to his horse, but was prevented by a command from his master to examine into the state of the springs of the carriage; Lord Warringdon having certain misgivings as to the dependance to be placed on Jim's assertion, "that nothing at all was the matter."

When the group of peasants saw that Mr. Wilmot was one of the *bogged* travellers, they threw up their hats and shouted for joy.

"Here! boys!" cried Kelly, "lift it out, body and bones—horses and all! first

three cheers for the masther, and then put your shoulders to the wheels—here it goes! a long pull, a sthrong pull, and a pull altogether! now boys!"

As desired, they gave first the three cheers, so long and loud, that Lord Warringdon pressed his hands to his ears—they then "put their shoulders to the wheel," and placed the carriage once more on Terra Firma.

"Thank ye, my men:" said Mr. Wilmot.

"Thank ye, my fine fellows:" said Lord Warringdon.

"Ye're welcome, ye're welcome, to that, and more;" returned they, good-humouredly.

"This is Lord Warringdon, come to canvass the county;" observed Mr. Wilmot.

"And yourselves, my honest fellows among the number;"—added Lord Warringdon.

"Och! the masther is the one you must

ax, my lord:" replied the spokesman, with a smile — "we always vote the way the masther plazes, you know;" he added, however, with the courtesy characteristic, (in those days,) of an Irish peasant, and more particularly of a———Irish peasant. "Not but, indeed, we'd be glad, t'would be for your honour's lordship, he'd bid us vote; ye're welcome to Ireland, and the county of———."

"Thank ye, thank ye, my honest fellows -here's a couple of guineas to drink your master's health."

"And here's something to drink success to Lord Warringdon;" said Mr. Wilmot.

"Long life to ye both!" cried many voices — "the masther and the mather's frind for ever!"

"Lord Warringdon for ever!" cried Mr. Wilmot, who desired to give the canditate a more definite designation than that of "the masther's friend."

"Warringdon for ever!" they echoed—

Warringdon and Wilmot for ever! huzza! huzza!" and they shouted after the departing travellers, with all the energy and deafening clamour of three-score of Irishmen, with money in their pockets and good will in their hearts.

"Well, misther Symmons, what do ye think of Irish '*voters*,' now? what would ye take to tell one of them boys the comical stories ye have in England about 'em?"

Mr. Symmons was pleased to observe that "they were fine fellows," and there the conversation ended.

The road began to improve as they drew near to Castle Wilmot. Traces of Jim Flanagan's handy-work became apparent, by the diminution of jolts and accession of speed. Lord Warringdon, over-powered with fatigue, had sunk into a pleasing oblivion of aching bones. Mr. Wilmot amused himself with his thoughts. Mr. Symmons was grand—Mr. Kelly, and his humble friend, and ardent admirer, Jim Naughton, agreed

that the above-mentioned Mr. Symmons "was a fantastical *omadhoun*, that would never be good for any thing till he got a taste of the shillelagh;" and thus all journeyed along, until the plantations of Castle Wilmot gladdened their sight. Bonfires were burning on all the heights, far and near, in honour of the master's return. A huge one was blazing at the Castle Wilmot gate, in honour of their noble guest; and much whiskey was drunk, and much tobacco smoked, to testify their joy on his arrival; "lashins," of both those luxuries having been sent out by Lady Anne. Lord Warringdon was aroused from his slumber at ten o'clock at night, by a shout of welcome. In the confusion of the moment, he forgot where he was, and seeing the huge fire, and the wild countenances and tattered garb of the revellers gathered round it, he half-imagined he might have fallen among a set of Irish cannibals, who had prepared a fire to roast him at. This delusion was, how-

ever, but momentary. Mr. Wilmot's kind voice, bidding him welcome, recalled him to a sense of his real situation. He alighted, but could scarcely stand, so crippled, jolted, and bruised was he. As the mob huzzaed, he tried to bow and smile, however, and, although nearly driven mad by the deep guttural roar of the men, and the shrill scream of the women and children, expressed himself delighted beyond measure at their flattering reception.

"Ye'ar late, sir;" observed Pat Murphy, as he led the way, with lights into the house. "My lady, and the young ladies, was mighty unasy about you're not coming to dinner, sir."

"The road was so bad," returned his master, "we could not come sooner."

"The road bad? was it indeed, sir?" exclaimed Pat, "'tis newly come to it, that's all I can say—ye're are welcome, my lord."

"Thank ye, my good fellow:" replied his Lordship.

"Are you lame, my lord? you seem to thread tinder."

"No—only stiff from the jolting:" he replied.

"That Jim must have dhruv ye mighty bad;" observed Pat.

"Bring us something to eat, directly, Pat;" said Mr. Wilmot, and meantime allow me to pioneer you to the drawing-room, my lord."

But his lordship objected to appearing in such trim before ladies; it was therefore arranged that they should sup by themselves in another room; and defer the presentation till the morrow.

CHAPTER VI.

FOR some days after his arrival at Castle-Wilmot, Lord Warringdon continued to feel the effects of Mr. Wilmot's roads, and Jim Naughton's driving. Nothing, however, could be more polite than were his assurances of satisfaction, and, indeed, admiration, of all he saw and heard, ate and drank, at Castle Wilmot.

"My journey," said he, smiling, "seems quite like an incident, in a fairy tale. After having wandered through grand and extensive solitudes, under the care of a pow-

erful enchanter, at a stroke of his wand, the scene changes, and I find myself in a noble and ancient castle, surrounded by luxuries of every description; by all that can charm the eye, or gratify the taste; and, though last mentioned, not the least appreciated, the smiles of fair and gentle ladies."

Under the united influences of capital living (he had game and fish in perfection and abundance) and of cheerful society, Lord Warringdon was "the moral of a nice gentleman," if Pat Murphy be considered good authority;—we think that he is. In fact, the candidate continued in high good humour, amused at every thing, and even, in his turn, condescending to amuse.

"Amuse! Warringdon amuse! why he is one of us, you know; the thing is impossible!"

Dear people! we crave a moment's explanation. In the first place, pray recollect that your noble and apathetic brother is no longer in town; alas! not even in his ele-

gant retirement in the country: nay, that he no longer treads English soil, "at all, at all;" that, in fact, he is in Ireland. Now, unfortunately, there is something in the very air of Ireland which acts on the most pertinaciously rigid muscles, and makes those laugh who never laughed before, and never may again. In the second place, recollect that man is a gregarious animal. The individual, separated by some unlucky chance from his own herd, will fall in with another herd of his species. In the third place, consider he was not only alone in a country where apathy is ignorantly mistaken for stupidity, but also that he was absolutely necessitated, as a candidate, to make himself popular; and now, have we, even partially, succeeded in vindicating your erring friend?

But, to continue, as we, story-tellers, say:

The young lord, recollecting his father's caution concerning Lady Anne's match-

making talents, observed her carefully; and to his surprise and satisfaction, found in her habitual manner a decided refutation of the alleged gift.

Her ladyship had been very pretty; she was still interesting, and even loveable; and there were about her a softness and simplicity almost approaching to *naïveté*, which quite precluded the supposition of the existence of *arriéres pensées* of any kind. All seemed clear and open as the noon-day.

"What a fool my father must be," thought the experienced Viscount, "to have suspected such an unaffected, unartificial woman as this is, of being a match-maker! I never yet knew him form a correct estimate of character;" and so, principally that he might have the satisfaction of proving his father wrong, he was unwittingly running the road to prove him right.

But Lady Anne only puzzled Lord Warringdon. She was, in truth, a consummate

actress: a female Proteus, who, if it became absolutely necessary, could change, at will, her very nature. She followed, to the very letter, the scriptural injunction of "being all things to all men;" and her facility in penetrating the motives and views of others fully equalled the variety and perfection of her own powers of transformation. She instantly saw, therefore, what was likely "to take" with Lord Warringdon, and manœuvred accordingly.

Upon hearing of his intended visit, she had arranged, at once, to marry him to one of her daughters; but could not decide which, till she should have slightly studied the "*carte du pays.*"

"Though educated with precisely the same care, my two unmarried girls are provokingly dissimilar," she said to herself; *to herself*, observe; for think not that Lady Anne kept any other confidante: "had Isabel Maria's good sense, or had Maria Isabel's beauty, I never could meet any

difficulties in my path. But I am, at present, placed thus: this man may, perhaps, be attracted by Isabel's beauty; but if he should happen to prove ugly, or silly, the world will not get Isabel to take any pains about him. Again; Maria, who would make no difficulty as to taking him, *he* may not choose to have;—and so, and in this teazing way, I am continually thwarted in my best-laid plans."

After the Viscount's arrival, and that she had reconnoitred him, Lady Anne decided on marrying him to her youngest daughter. She felt, however, rather unwilling to hurt Maria's feelings by abrubtly announcing her fiat; and trusted, therefore, to some favourable occasion for indirectly conveying it.

She and Maria were sitting alone, soon after the appearance of their guest.

"I have been studying Warringdon's character very carefully," observed Lady Anne, "and he is suspicious."

"Most young men of fortune are," rejoined Maria.

"I know:" returned Lady Anne, "*that*, however, I don't so much mind; one could easily throw him off his guard. But I'm sorry to say he is a thorough man of the world; has no feeling; never will fall in love"

"Tis'nt necessary that he should," said Maria, rising to poke the fire.

"Not always necessary, I grant you; but certainly highly desirable; and, in this case, I fear, absolutely indispensable."

"Why?" asked Maria.

"Because," answered her mother, "he is not the sort of man one can easily persuade to fancy himself in love, when he is not; neither is he the sort of man to commit himself, by some nonsensical speech, that means nothing, but which a girl's family choose to call something, and which a father, or a brother, calls him out for; in a word, he is a man never carried away by

feeling; always on his guard not to say what might be made a handle of against him on some future occasion; cold and cautious, though apparently the very reverse."

"Bad materials for *our* purpose," observed Maria; "but your conclusions jump with my own, Mamma; and so *I*, at any rate, must consider them to be well founded; and it is clear that I can have no chance, and Isabel, I fear, but a bad one."

Lady Anne secretly rejoiced at this voluntary renouncing of all claims on Lord Warringdon, on Maria's part; yet seemingly acquiescing in her daughter's opinion, observed, "I believe you are right; and, since you give up the pursuit, Maria, we must jointly take measures in favour of Isabel; for, although I do consider it difficult to manage him, I do *not*, by any means, look upon it as impossible. To begin our one little plot, then:—Whatever either of us may think of Warringdon, we must

say nothing to Isabel on the subject, but deceive her, like a child, for her own good —she must imagine herself captivated by him, or she will never even try to attract him; that is, in a serious, business-like way—you know all her romantic nonsense about affections and sympathies. Now, Warringdon is incapable of loving any thing but himself, but she must not think so, or she would not love him."

"But what is the use of making her love him," interrupted Maria, "or even fancy she does, if he be, as you say, too cold to fall in love, himself, and too cunning to suffer any body to marry him, if he does *not?*"

"Very true," rejoined Lady Anne, "but I will make *him*, too, dream that he is in love."

"Dream it!" exclaimed Maria laughing, "is it a *blasé* man like that? dear mamma! what can you be thinking of?—a simple boy, just come of age, brought up in a country

clergyman's family, one might possibly persuade out of his own senses; but, even you," she added playfully tapping her mother's cheek, "would fail in such an experiment on a man about town, like our right honourable and well esteemed guest, Viscount Warringdon — dream it, indeed!— never—never!"

Lady Anne listened with the utmost composure to her daughter's mockery, and proceeded thus:—"The difficulty you state is a considerable one, I admit, indeed I have before hinted it myself—yet, I hope, by my mode of attack, to prove it is not, at least, insuperable—Lord Warringdon, wherever he goes, finds himself an object of attraction to daughters, and of speculation to mothers—he is therefore continually on the *qui vive,* like the garrison of a besieged town, in fear of a *coup de main,* in fact, he is—mark me, on his guard against *designing* mammas; but in me he shall nothing find save simplicity and innocence."

"Yes, but as you want him to devour Isabel, and not yourself, what good will all the simplicity and innocence in the world, on your part, signify?" interrupted Maria, with a laugh.

"You must give me time, my dear Maria, to develope my plans. He never can suspect so indifferent and unguarded a mother as I shall appear to him to be; he must acquit me, at once, of deep design—of malice prepense—of premeditated evil. More than that. I shall make him think not only that I do not want his alliance, but that I actually avoid it."

"And how will you contrive that?"

"By appearing to have somebody else in view for Isabel."

"That would be an excellent method certainly, but who can you have in view?"

"Mc Alpine," replied Lady Anne.

"Mc Alpine!" echoed Maria; "Warringdon will never think that you could prefer such a creature to him."

"Yes, he must though; for I shall give him to understand that Isabel is engaged to Mc Alpine. You know he is dying for her, and the least encouragement would be enough to bring him to her feet."

"Yes," said Maria, "but Isabel will never consent to a project so full of what she would call artifice and deception."

"I don't intend that she shall know we have any project of the kind—I shall persuade her that I really wish her to marry Mc Alpine."

"Still I cannot see, for the life of me, how persuading her to marry Mc Alpine, is to be the means of marrying her to Warringdon."

"You are really very dull this morning, my dear Maria. I do not intend, of course, *absolutely* persuading her to marry Mc Alpine, only making her and every one else think that I do."

"Ah, yes, now I understand your meaning perfectly," rejoined Maria, "but if Warringdon is not in love with her, himself, what will he care whom she marries?"

"I know human nature, at least, men-of-fashion-nature, better than you do, Maria. Lord Warringdon is a man of pretention, vain of his person, vain of his fashion, vain of his rank and position in society, vain of his talent (he has some), he cannot, therefore, exist without being admired; his vanity then will be gratified by the preference which Isabel will unconsciously betray, for she is a bad dissembler—and, on the other hand, he will be piqued by my apparent negligence—so, to spite the mother, he will marry the daughter—is not that a tolerable scheme?"

"Very," answered Maria, musing.

"And feasible?" asked her mother.

"Humph, as for that, I have my doubts; to me it appears somewhat theoretical."

"I wager you a Chantilly veil I succeed," said Lady Anne smiling.

"'Done!" cried Maria. And here the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of visitors.

CHAPTER VI.

Upon all his canvassing visits, within riding distance, Lord Warringdon was accompanied by the young ladies as well as by their father; Lady Anne's object being to establish a certain intimacy between the parties, before she stepped in, with Mr. Mc Alpine, in her hand, to break it up. These excursions were, like most equestrian parties of ladies and gentleman, highly favourable for beginning and continuing a flirtation. Indeed, Lady Anne insisted that riding was infinitely more useful than walk-

ing for getting on with the men, combining, as she said, the advantages of a tête à tête (which you can always manage without having the air of arranging), with all the gaiety and frankness warranted by social manners and intercourse. Then, ladies are timid on horseback, and require many little offices of gallantry and protection; (by the way, it is remarkable a woman seldom screams outright, though ever so scared, if the man she wishes to attract be at her side; her ear-piercing appeal being reserved to arouse a dull, a careless, or a straying attendant.)

Upon the favourable occasions alluded to, Isabel scarce ever pretended to be alarmed, however,—we can say so much for her; but, when a little frightened, at her horse sticking in a bog, or backing towards the edge of a precipice, on a mountain road, she certainly affected to be more so; encouraging, in fact, rather than contending with her fears; for, though not tutored

by her mother. Isabel was aware how interesting a woman appears to a man when claiming, evidently against her own will, or desire, his protection.

Well, the Viscount proved a very attentive cavalier; why so? as much for the sake of the daughter's beauty, as the father's votes? Ask Lady Anne. But Lord Warringdon, himself, said *to* himself, that she chatted agreeably; was well-mannered, and, altogether, "a very nice person."

Poor Isabel, on her part, was even better disposed towards him.—In her eyes he appeared to be more than "a very nice person;" —he was a loveable one. She thought him strikingly handsome, and possessing all the polish of high breeding, without its coldness. We must add that he could be agreeable, too, in many ways; among the rest, by telling anecdotes of people known to his auditors, either personally or by report; or by repeating good things which he had heard; and, as the actor often gets more credit by

his personification of a character than the author for its delineation of it, so Lord Warrington earned from Isabel a reputation for cleverness, merely on the strength of his recollections, and adaptation of the cleverness of others. To conclude; he had spent much time abroad; spoke the foreign languages well,—for an Englishman, surprisingly well; knew a little of many things, and took the tone of knowing a great deal of all:—in a word, was just the one to be a "pleasant fellow" among men, and a "nice creature" among women.

But suppose the Viscount had not been heir to an earldom, and a hundred thousand per annum, very little encumbered? Would Isabel's usual penetration have failed, in that case, to discern in him some points less to his advantage? Again we say, ask Lady Anne. And, like another personage, not to be named, just as we speak of her ladyship, she re-appears on the scene.

The time had come to avail herself of Mr. Mc Alpine;—she was a little puzzled how to get at him; Mr. Wilmot entered the room with a letter in his hand, announcing Mr. Mc Alpine's intended arrival that evening, to dinner.

Lord Warringdon and Isabel had been looking over some music, and he was requesting her to sing, and she was preparing to oblige him, when her mother exclaimed "Good news, Isabel, Mc Alpine is to be here almost immediately; so run off," she continued, in a lower tone, but still loud enough to be overheard by Lord Warringdon, "run off and dress; I want you to be in your best looks to-day."

Isabel stared in astonishment. — Her mother smiled: — Isabel was completly at fault.

"It is not time to dress yet," she observed, returning to the instrument.

"Isabel," resumed her mother, "I wish to speak with you a moment." And so

saying she left the room, followed by her daughter, who could not help wondering why Mr. Mc Alpine's arrival should be such good news to her, seeing she abominated him; and why she should take more pains with her toilette on this day than on any preceding one.

Her mother addressed her thus:—

"My dear Isabel, I have particular reasons, which I will explain to you some other time, for wishing you to please Mc Alpine."

"But I cannot endure him, mamma; you know I cannot," interrupted Isabel.

"He is a worthy, excellent young man, and would make you a very good husband."

"God forbid!" returned Isabel; "I would rather die than marry him."

"Folly, my dear; any one who had not a prior attchment might very well contrive to marry him, and to like him very well, too; and pray do you like any one else?"

"No;" replied Isabel, blushing and hesitating.

"Very well, then," observed Lady Anne, "I request that, since you have nothing to object against Mr. Mc Alpine, except that you do not happen to be desperately in love with him, you will treat him with more consideration than hitherto you have been pleased to do; and also that you will henceforward think and act like other young women of your age and station, and not reject eligible offers because 'this man is too tall;' that 'too short;' one 'to fair;' another 'too dark;' somebody else because he doesn't sing; and somebody else because he sings too much: your father can give you no money, and you are no longer a mere child; I would advise you, as your sincere friend, as well as your affectionate mother, to consider your position well, and if Mr. Alpine remain favourably disposed towards you, to accept his attentions; it will be much better than riding about, talk-

ing nonsense to Lord Warringdon, who will be off, to-morrow or next day, and if he happen to see you again, scarce remember you, perhaps."

Isabel coloured deeply, partly from confusion, and partly from indignation at her mother's supposition, but she remained silent.

"Do, my sweet Isabel, do as I wish you," continued Lady Anne, kissing her cheek; "you never will repent having followed my advice."

She then quitted Isabel, who did not return for some time to the sitting-room. That she had not passed the interval in very agreeable meditations might be inferred from a slight redness about her eyes, and a langour and dejection of manner, that struck and interested Lord Warringdon;—he thought she had never looked so well; he told her so; and her pale cheek glowed,—and she looked away for a moment, and when their eyes met again, hers were filled with tears.

"Lord Warringdon," said Mr. Wilmot, "before Mc Alpine comes, I must tell you what sort of person you are about to see;—first, as the most important point, what he he has,—then what he is; he has ten thousand a year, unencumbered: *that*, you will say, concerns Maria and Isabel more than you; but, however, this concerns you,—he has the next best interest to mine in the county;—in politics, he is a staunch tory, and so he is likely to remain, for he has not yet half provided for his poor relations:" (N. B. This was in the good, the halcyon days of toryism in Ireland, when the favourite candidate was sure to be the one who would bestow, or promise, at least, the greatest number of places.) Mr. Wilmot proceeded: Mr. Mc Alpine and I are excellent friends; that's to say, we don't either of us care if the other broke his neck."

"My dear! my dear!" interrupted Lady Anne, "how can you talk so carelessly? Lord Warringdon will really believe you

are serious; very extraordinary under our peculiar circumstances;" looking over at Isabel, "you should not, indeed, my love, say such things, really it is quite shocking." She said this in a hurried, deprecating tone, and then, resuming her usual manner,— "recollect the liberal support he has always afforded you, without stipulations of any kind, for a single friend."

"Oh, I recollect perfectly," replied her husband, laughing; "he monopolizes all my interest, on the plea that he had not bargained, like others, before-hand. By Jove! his support was like the barbarian allies of the Roman empire, a service that cost dearer than his enmity."

Lady Anne fidgetted about while he was speaking, and seemed exceedingly annoyed, but why he could not well comprehend, not being aware that Mr. Mc Alpine's failings were a forbidden subject at Wilmot castle, so he continued:—"Though my friend, Mc Alpine is the soul of honour,

take care that you have witnesses to your conversation, or —— no matter what," he added with a laugh. "But only if you have not a friend present, you may have to employ one on less amiable business, some future day; as I was once obliged to do, and my friend Mc Alpine then immediately remembered all he had forgotten; pistols are wonderful helps to a treacherous memory."

"Did you ever hear any thing like your father?" exclaimed Lady Anne, addressing her eldest daughter, "to talk in such a way of Mc Alpine before Isabel — highly improper."

"What's improper?" enquired Mr. Wilmot.

Lady Anne remained silent, shaking her pretty little foot in assumed displeasure.

"What's improper, Anne, my love?" enquired he once more,

"Your abuse of Mr. Mc Alpine, my dear."

"My abuse! I am not abusing the man at all—I don't care about him one way or the other."

"Yes! but that is the very thing I complain of,—you ought to care."

"Why, my love?"

"My dear Wilmot," rejoined Lady Anne, "you must forget, surely."

"I can't imagine," said he to himself, "what the devil she is at."

The rapid approach of horsemen up the ascent to the castle turnod the conversation. A few minutes afterwards, Mr. Mc Alpine made his appearance amid the group.

"Delighted to see you," said Lady Anne, in her softest tone of welcome.

"How dy'e do, my dear fellow?" said Mr. Wilmot, "glad to see you;"—and Mr. Wilmot *was* glad to see him, because it happened to be in his own house, and there his greatest enemy would no longer be treated, or even considered, as such. We shall take advantage of the half-hour before

dinner, to give a sketch of the *morale* and *physique* of Mr. Mc Alpine, of Mc Alpine Castle.

To begin with his outward man, that being the most important division of the two-fold nature of a young male acquaintance. Mr. Mc Alpine was considered by all who had the pleasure of knowing him, (except himself) as a specially ill-looking person. 'Tis fair to state, however, what really *was* his appearance, in order that our readers may judge whether he, or his acquaintances, were right. He was very tall, and very thin, with a very short body, and very long limbs, that were always straying about to all points of the compass, as if each was setting forward, by itself, on a voyage of discovery through the world; his hair was very red; his eyes very white; his teeth very yellow; his mouth very wide; and his nose very broad—so far for his person. With respect to his mind, Nature had dealt a little more favourably by him.

Originally he had not been quite deficient in intellect; but, unfortunately, his early education had been neglected; in fact Mr. Mc Alpine arrived at years of discretion, before he became heir-at-law to his present estate, seven or eight good people having been in the entail upon it: gradually, however, they died without "issue in tail male"—and when he succeeded to the property, he could barely read and write. He had sufficient good sense, however, to feel his deficiencies; and gave a still rarer proof of understanding, by endeavouring to remedy them; he bought good books, and read and profited by them, and thus effected wonders; but, unluckily, he imagined, comparing himself with himself, that as he now knew much more than he formerly had done, he actually knew more than any one had ever known before him. Eventually he decided in his own mind that nothing could equal him in knowledge or beauty, and, consequently, put a high price on himself "in

the marrying way;" and though he was always talking of taking a wife, never could be induced to decide, lest he might, as he said, "throw himself away." While he was thus deliberating, Isabel Wilmot returned from the Continent, the theme of universal admiration. He soon came to the solemn determination "that she was just the person worthy of becoming Mrs. Mc Alpine." He did not, however, say too much in commendation of her, lest he should raise the market on himself; only pronouncing her to be "a nice girl, certainly, and if married to a man she loved, one that would turn out a charming woman; but all depended on that; at present she thinks too much of herself a great *dale*." Occasionally Mr. Mc Alpine's pronounciation was somewhat broad, and formed a curious and amusing contrast with his high flown style and sentimentality.—"She wants anim*a*tion," (we mark thus a peculiar drawling emphasis in Mr. Mc Alpine's articulation) "because as yet she's indifferent about

plasing, but once let her love a man of a certain order of mind, and she will be absolutely seraphic—she's clever, and accomplished, and beautiful; but she's not, as yet, interesting, because, as yet she has not loved." So, to give the finishing touch to Isabel's perfections, he did all in his power to inspire her with a passion; but the young lady, someway, was deficient in taste, as well as gratitude, and by no means seconded Mr. Mc Alpine's benevolent views for her improvement.

Maria thought it a thousand pities that the owner of Mc Alpine Castle should be lost to the family, so she laughed, and talked, and laboured, might and main, to get into his good graces,—all to no purpose; a pleasant, lively, off-hand girl, was his detestation. Take notice, Mr. Mc Alpine was all romance and refinement. "Maria Wilmot has no softness, no sentiment, no manner; besides, I MUST have, he would sometimes say, grinning, and displaying his

terrific set of teeth, besides I MUST have a fine woman—that is an indispensable necessary of life to me; beauty is the aliment of *my* existence. No—if I take either, it shall be Isabel. I fix on her." But though he fixed upon Isabel, Isabel did not fix upon him; he continued, however, to call her stiffness, reserve, and her coldness, modesty; never for an instant suspected they could be any thing else, where he was in question.

Lady Anne had not yet decided whether she should make her younger daughter marry him, or make him marry her elder, when the arrival of Lord Warringdon caused her to change her whole plan of operations. She now courted him upon the principle that we offer a plate of meat to one lap-dog, intended for another—by the way, this neat and appropriate simile reminds us that it is time to return to our family party, whom we left counting the minutes until dinner should be announced.

CHAPTER VII.

ALL are now seated at dinner. Lord Warringdon's thoughts and attentions (we will not say his affections, because, like lady Anne, we are not quite sure he has any) are divided between a plate of salmon, just out of the water, and the pretty downcast eyes of his fair and flirting equestrian companion, Isabel. But when we state that his attentions were thus divided, we do not take upon ourselves to assert that the division was perfectly equal, it might be, perhaps, somewhat like an Irish halving of a thing—one half a little bigger than the

other; perhaps, also, the bigger one might not have fallen to the lady's share. Under the circumstances of the case, however, she might consider herself peculiarly fortunate in having any portion at all; for a man of modern times, who thinks of the lady of his love, when he has any thing else to think of, particularly so good a thing as salmon in season, gives a proof of the depth and intensity of his passion, equal to that which blowing out his brains would have been some forty years ago. Isabel, however, had been placed by her mother in precisely the position best calculated to ensure as much worship as was possible, to be, namely, just opposite the viscount; so that whenever his eyes were off his plate, they naturally fell on his vis à vis. And, what we look at, Lady Anne knew, we think of; and indeed Lord Warringdon was obliging enough not only to think of Isabel, but to think of her all that lady Anne was anxious he should think, viz., that "she was

a very lovely girl, that she seemed to be very much inclined to fall in love with him, and that it was a great pity to give so much beauty and taste to such a stupid ugly fellow as Mc Alpine;" said ugly fellow being at the moment whispering with his mouth full, sundry soft things to his fair, but listless neighbour, and, in the earnestness of his discourse, leaning across her plate, and staring full in her face, with his large white eyes, which he rolled about in the most approved style of *loverism*. Isabel would have pawned a joint of her pretty taper finger to have dared turn her back on him, or to slap his face; and in her struggles to conceal her disgust, for she knew that her mother's eye was fixed on her, she became silent and constrained. Now, any other man but Mc Alpine would have been hereupon offended — he, on the contrary was charmed, for he interpreted the care with which she avoided his soft glances, or interrupted his compliments, as

undeniable proofs of a tender and absorbing passion, which, from maidenly reserve, she laboured to conceal.

"Why did you not wait for the gentleman you speak of?" she asked, eagerly seizing on an observation just made, to turn his attention from her beauty and his own admiration.

"Because," answered he, "Mr. Barham was not quite ready to accompany me—and I could not wait; for" lowering his voice into a whisper, soft and tender as that of the boy-god himself, he added, "I was languishing for a *bame* (beam) from the sun of my soul, fair Isabel's bright eyes—for what is existence to *me* when absent from *her*, the source of light, and life, and hope!"

"But don't you think he may be offended?" enquired Isabel, not appearing to notice his twaddle.

"I explained to him that I had important avocations at Mc Alpine Castle, which would prevent my having the pleasure of

accompanying him there. I have been expecting him these three days past, and am half-surprised I did not meet him here, spell-bound by the facinations of the captivating enchantress of Wilmot Castle—the fair Isabella—that cruel but charming creature—whose gaze is death—who lures but to destroy."—

A loud knocking at the hall-door, interrupted Mr. Mc Alpine's speech—and caused such a sensation, among the whole party, as would scarcely be credited, except by those who know by experience what can be effected by the most trifling occurrence which promises to break up the usual routine of a country-house life. While every one was wondering who it could be, and each sat with his or her knife or fork arrested, as if by a spell, in his or her hand; while all ears were eagerly bent to catch the glory due to first discoverers; and while all eyes were rivetted, as if they possessed the property of lynx vision, and

would pierce the very walls; the door was softly opened, and father John Molloy stole on tip-toe, into the room.

"Mercy on us! 'tis only you, father John!" exclaimed Maria. "I thought it was some prince in disguise, come to crave hospitality, and who, in return for a dinner and a bed, would fall in love with me—but never mind, sit down, father John—here by me, and tell us some news."

"I beg your pardon, Miss, for a minute, I have something to say to your papa;" and so saying, he crept round the table to Mr. Wilmot, and made some observation in a low voice, to which the other replied:

"Certainly—beg of him by all means to walk in—why did you not bring him in at once, father John?"

"I was delicate of taking a liberty, Mr. Wilmot, Sir;" replied he, looking at lady Anne, from whose mind he desired to efface, by his present respectful demeanour, the

somewhat unfavourable impression made by his brother's conduct in the best room.

"I'll go myself;" said Wilmot, starting up, he suddenly stopped short, however, and whispered to the priest, "you are sure e isn't one of those fellows with papers?"

"Ah, not at all, sir—he's a gentleman from England—an elegant fellow as ever I'd wish to see, and mighty agreeable."

"Who are you talking about?" enquired Maria, pricking up her ears, at the words "gentleman from England—elegant fellow, &c."

Lady Anne's sense of hearing, equally acute as that of her daughter's, was roused by the same gratifying sounds, and enquired with pleased alacrity—

"What is the matter, my love? Is there any one coming, Mr. Molloy?"

Both the persons addressed had, however, disappeared before her question had reached their ears. Meantime, the party, with the exception of lady Anne and Maria,

proceeded in their agreeable occupations, and waited patiently until time should unravel the mystery, if mystery there were. But Miss Wilmot and her mother sat on thorns, during the few seconds of Mr. Wilmot's absence; and their satisfaction may be imagined, but certainly not described, at seeing him return, accompanied by a fair, and rather good looking and gentlemanlike young man.

"This gentleman," said Mr. Wilmot, ushering him in, "was found by father John, upset by a drunken driver, about ten miles off—the man had quite lost his way—so Mr. Molloy very properly became his guide and conducted him here. Lady Anne, and my daughters, as well as myself, will do all in our power," he added, smiling, "to induce you to forgive our bad roads and worse drivers."

During the progress of this speech, bows and smiles on both sides had been

exchanged, and the traveller had accepted the proffered seat near Maria.

"God bless me! can that be you, Mr. Barham?" exclaimed Mr. Mc Alpine, "I had not the *laste* idea it was you—how d'ye do? I'm very glad to see you at last—Wilmot, this is the gentleman I told you that I had been expecting."

"Really—who could have thought it? is it possible? how very odd!" &c., &c., ran from mouth to mouth, as is usual on such occasions as the present.

"I am afraid you are very much fatigued;" observed lady Anne, in the soft accents habitual to her when addressing the young of the other sex.

"Oh no! I am much obliged to you, not in the least;" replied Mr. Barham, "quite delighted, I assure you—I think it capital fun, being overturned in a bog-hole—I like it of all things—'tis quite an adventure, you know, and so Irish, like what one sees in a play, you know—never would

happen one in England, if one was travelling for ever."

"Then you have never been in Ireland before, I suppose?" observed Maria.

"Never; and I am so glad I've come!"

"You like it then?"

"Oh yes, of all things—never laughed so much in all my life as since I have been in Ireland. To-day, I thought I should have died I laughed so, when I was thrown out of the carriage—it was capital! there was the driver in such a fright, you know, for fear I was killed, and when he found I wasn't a bit hurt, he got afraid I'd complain of him to his master; and began cursing his horses, and swearing 'twas their fault, and not his; and then he tried to get me up, and couldn't, he was so drunk—then he fell over me, and neither of us could stir, I was laughing so, and he was so drunk; and there we should have lain all night I suppose, only your friend Mr. Molly was kind enough to bring me here.

"Very happy to have had the pleasure of seeing you," replied Maria, in her usual good-natured tone—"He seems a sad fool, poor young man," thought she. "I wonder, is he rich?" Her thoughts upon this point were, in the course of the evening, most satisfactorily terminated by a scrap of dialogue, she overheard between him and the Viscount.

"Pray, may I ask," said Lord Warringdon," are you one of the Barhams of Leicestershire?"

"To be sure I am; Barham of Cralcourt, myself: you know the Cralcourt hounds?"

"Famous all over England," rejoined Lord Warringdon. "So, you are Barham of Cralcourt; your father used to be greatly on the turf. Has he many horses running now?"

"No, I don't think he has," returned the other, laughing, "unless he has found some in Heaven—he has been dead these two years."

"Happy fellow," observed Lord Warringdon, "your own master—'the world before you where to choose' like our first parents."

"Not my own master yet—I'm not to be of age for a year-and-a-half, you know; and I have got such a tiresome old fellow for a guardian; keeps me so tight, you can't think; Sir Willoughby Turner of Mandeville Park; lives near Melton, you know; I can't bear him—he has got three such ugly daughters, you can't think."

Maria, who had edged her chair close to Mr. Barham's, on the discovery that he was a rich minor (the Cralcourt estate was eighteen thousand per annum), here joined the conversation.

"Do you mean," she asked, laughing, "that your guardian's having three ugly daughters is the original cause, or only an additional one, for not liking him? Poor man; you should pity, rather than dsilike him for that."

"Well, so I do; I pity him very much,

I'm sure; and them, too, poor girls; for I'm sure they will never get married—unless Sir Willoughby gets people to marry 'em, the way he wanted me; but there was no reason I should, when I didn't like it, was there?"

"No, indeed," replied Maria, as frankly as if she was in no way concerned, in a question which touched ugly girls, who wanted to find husbands. But, indeed, never, on similar occasions, did she betray any thing like *esprit de corps;* she could laugh as heartily at a jest against plain women, or husband-hunting ones, as if she were a beauty, and had refused half her male acquaintances. Who, then, could suspect the plain, but good-humoured, laughing, Maria Wilmot, of being dangerous or designing? Certainly not Mr. Barham of Cralcourt, whom, from this hour, she marked as her victim. Encouraged by her approbation of the exertion of free-will he had evinced, with respect to marrying either of

the Miss Turners, he proceeded with his confidential communications thus:

"So when I found he wanted me to marry Ellen Turner, whether I would or no—I cut and ran."

"You were quite right," observed Maria, "I like to see young men have proper spirit."

"I told him, you know, I was going to Paris, and he began to give me such a lot of advice about *rouge et noir*, and to keep out of mischief, and all that sort of thing; so I promised I would; and he asked me how long I should stay, and I said about three months; so I should not be in the least surprized if they were all by this time in Paris, after me; and wondering why they can't find me."

"So you did not go to Paris, after all?"

"Lord bless you, no; I guessed they would be after me, so I came here; they will be so surprised when they hear I'm in Ireland; don't you think they will?"

"Capital!" exclaimed Maria, laughing, (she could laugh, as other women cry or faint, whenever she chose)—"Capital; I give you credit for that idea."

"But the best of it is, they can't hear a word of it, for a long while, for nobody knows where I am gone, I kept it such a secret!" I did not even bring a servant with me, for fear he might tell—just for a lark, you know. I was determined to have some fun by myself at last—wasn't I right?"

Maria here burst into one of her best fits of laughing, partly natural, partly affected, to please Mr. Barham's un-aristocratic laughter-loving propensities.

"What are you laughing at? do tell me, Miss Wilmot," laughing already himself, from sympathy.

"Why, I was thinking, Mr. Barham, that your friends will be sure to look for you, every day, at the *Morgue!*"

"The *Morgue!*" repeated he, nearly screaming with delight—"Oh! so they will,

I'm positive!—I never thought
how good! Oh! what capital fu
he almost fell off his chair in a c
of glee, at Maria's happy idea. "
Wilmot, you will kill me," conti
when sufficiently recovered from
sport to articulate intelligibly—" I
if I have done any thing but laug
ever since I arrived in Ireland! I n
such a place for fun in my life.
Irish people ever leave Ireland; th
can laugh half so much any where
should like so to be an Irishman!-C
Wilmot, Mr. Molly told me such
story, coming along, about somebo
ing him a trick at a funeral; I don'
recollect what it was, though. I w
would ask him to tell it over ag
you? I should be so much obliged

Maria was very well disposed t
the assistance of so faithful an
Father John, to aid her virtuous
in the task of entertaining their ne

"Father John, I want you — here's a petitioner for one of your good stories."

"What good story, Miss Maria?" enquired Father John, quite surprised to find he was considered a teller of good stories.

"Oh! the one about the funeral, Mr. Molloy, if you please," said Mr. Barham.

"The one about the funeral," repeated Father John, slowly and musingly; "upon my word and credit, Mr. Barham, it fails me to remember what story you mane about a funeral. Can't you recollect some of the perticklars?"

"Somebody you thought was dying, and who was not."

"Oh! I remember now—Dan Murphy—But that's no story at all, Mr. Barham, but the blessed truth, I'm sorry to say; not but that I laugh sometimes myself, when I think how I was nicked out of my corpse;" and the good-humoured priest again laughed heartily at the recollection.

"Oh, it is all so good, Mr. Molloy; pray tell it again, will you?"

Lord Warringdon here joined the group, and added his solicitations to those of Mr. Barham, for the "funny corpse-story," though not, by many degrees, so great an *amateur* of fun as his Leicestershire compatriot. Lord Warringdon had sufficiently benefitted by Irish air to be able to listen, with tolerable satisfaction, to an Irish anecdote; besides, he was canvassing the county, and, of course, the priests.

"Pray, my dear sir, oblige us," he said.

"With all the pleasure in life, my lord. Most happy to contribute to your entertainment, gentlemen. But, upon my word, I'm afraid you'll be mighty disappointed, if you expect any great amusement, for 'tis nothing but just what happened to myself and Father Costelloe: that's my shuperior in the parish, the parish priest, you know."

"I thought," interrupted Mr. Barham, "you were the parish priest, yourself."

"I wish to the Lord I was," rejoined Mr. Molloy: "no, God help me! I'm only the coadjutor,—the curate, you know," observing that his English auditors did not understand the term. "Well, myself, and Father Costelloe, and Mrs. Priest,—that's the priest's neice-in-law, married to one Costelloe, that keeps a public house hard by Father Costelloe's,—we call her Mrs. Priest because there are so many Costelloes in the place, we'd never know which was which, if we did not call her by some name that wasn't her own; well, they and I were talking of one thing or other, one night, over our punch, when, all of a sudden, there comes the sorrows of a sassarara at the door; the Lord save us, says I; who have we got here? 'Who has the assurance and impertinence to come to my door at this unseesonable hour of the night?' cries Father

Costelloe, spaking in his fine English manner. (Take care, God bless you, Miss Maria, and don't tell him I say so). 'For one farthing,' says he, 'I'd *keen* the fellow, (cane, he meant) 'whoever he is, for his impudence.' I forgot to say it was Shrove-Tuesday, of all the days in the year. How do you know, Mr. Costelloe? says I; (he thinks it grand to be called Mr.) how do you know, says I, but it might be a cratur coming to get married, smart out of hand, afore lent. 'Mr. Molloy,' says he, drawing himself up the way he does when he wants to be mighty grand entirely (you know, Miss Maria?); 'I would not choose, for the best wedding in my parish, nor the best funeral, either, to be disturbed at my repasts.' How comical you are, thinks I: any way, it wouldn't be you that would get the ra'al disturbance, God help me! There isn't a man in the parish, gentlemen," said he, turning to his auditors, "that earns his victuals harder than myself;—rain, snow,

or hail, at cock crow, or pitch dark, away I am, tramping the bogs and mountains, while other people, that gets the two shares and more of the dues, are lying snug in their beds, or sitting over their warm fire and comfortable tumbler. But, what can't be cured must be endured,—no use fretting; grief killed the cat, we're told, so, I'll finish my story. May be, says I, it might be a crature that isn't *expected*."

"Somebody dying," said Maria to the gentlemen, "not *expected to live*."

"Do you think, says he, I would suffer myself to be disturbed, at this hour, by the best corpse in my parish? Well, in the middle of this, in walks Mrs. Priest: I forgot to say, she had slipped out of the room, half an hour before, but I never perceived it, 'Guess the news, gentlemen,' says she, seeming mighty plased. 'My grandmother! says I.' 'No, ra'al good news,' says she; 'Dan Murphy won't pass the night.' 'Don't bother us,' says I; 'sure he's always dying,

and a sorrow a one of him is dead yet,—God forgive me for cursing,' says I. 'Well, he's dying now in ra'al earnest.' 'How do you know?' says I. 'Wasn't his son here, a minute ago, tearing the house down, like mad?' 'And where is he now?' says I; 'till I spake to him.'—'You can't spake to him now,' says she, 'for he's gone up to the castle, to spake to Pat Murphy, his cousin, to tell him all about it, that he may be ready to attend the funeral, and bring what's wanting, you know;' looking mighty knowing at me. 'Arrah! no: its joking, you are, Mrs. Priest,' says I; for she's always at her thricks and schames, making fools of Father Costelloe and myself, telling us this one is going to be married, and that one expected, so I'm always on my guard with her; but this turn she spoke so sarious, and looked so plazed, I was thricked entirely, and made sure poor Dan was dying in earnest at last: God knows 'twas time for him, if ever he intended it.

But his equal for toughness I never seen: he has had Mrs. Finn, Mrs. Wilson, and the doctor at the dispensary at him, for these five years back, and even they couldn't send him off. Not an Easther came, but we expected our Easther dinner of him,—for his funeral would be the finest in the parish, there's such a dale of Murphys in it, and so well off as they are! the snuggest men to be seen in the province. But what made me give in to the joke, entirely, was the hurry Father Costelloe was in to get me off,—he wouldn't give me time to finish my tumbler, or chat a bit with Mrs. Priest.

"Well, it was pitch-dark,—raining cats and dogs, and the wind blowing so, you'd think 'twas ould Nick cooling his tay,—such a night I never seen for hardship and contrariness,—my horse and myself coming down every minute. Father Costelloe broke the crature's knees the last time he dined here; and 'tisn't the first horse he sarved so, and no wonder, poor man, he grows so

corpulent! Well, at last, I come to my journey's end. When I got to the poor man's door, I put on a mighty grave face,—you'd think my life was bound up in poor Pat Murphy's: not but I was ra'ally sorry for the crature, now that I thought he was dying in earnest, and that all would be soon over with him.

"I fastened my horse to the latch of the door: 'God save all here,' says I. "*Ceed mille faltha*," says Kutty, Dan's wife, smiling, and looking mighty plased. 'Them women,' thinks I to myself, 'are the dickens, sure enough! see, now, how well plased Kutty is, and her husband, who was always a good one to her, going from her, the crature!'—'Is he sinsible, Kutty,' says I. 'Sinsible! Father John? to be sure he is; why wouldn't he? he's not bad enough for that, yet.' Ah, then, how much worse would you have him, Kutty,' says I, 'if you wouldn't have him dead intirely;—can he spake, Kutty?' says I. 'Ah, then, why wouldn't

he spake, Father John?' says she. Myself couldn't make head or tail of her, 'so,' says I, 'bring me to him, Kutty, says I, and then I'll see myself how he is.' 'God bless your reverence, 'tis you that are fond of him, sure enough,' says she, 'to come all the ways this blessed night to see him; I'll sind for him, Father John,' says she. 'Send for him!' says I, 'what in the world do you mane, woman?' says I. 'I'll send for him to Derrymanagoslogh, I mane, Father John,' says she. 'It's a wonder he wouldn't rather die in his own house,' says I. 'So he would, if it was dying, he was,' says she. 'Why, what else is he doing, then?' says I. 'Smoaking and drinking, like the rest of the company, I b'lieve,' says she. 'What company are you talking of, at all, woman?' says I. 'Ah, sure, he's gone to the lower parish, beyant, to a dragging home of a daughther of a first cousin of his sisther's husband, that's married to a dacent boy, a cous in of his own.' 'Murder alive!' says I

to myself, 'and all the slavery I got driving like mad through the bogs, and my elegant tumbler of punch left cooling!' Well, I thought it did no good to be cross to poor Kutty, because her husband wasn't dying just to convanience me and Father Costelloe; so I put the best face I could upon the matter, and so I said I was mighty happy to find Dan was so much better, and off I set home."

"Oh! just tell me, before you go any further, what you mean by a dragging home," interrupted Mr. Barham.

"A dragging home, you know, is the same as a hauling home," returned Father John.

"Yes, but I don't know what that means either," replied the young Englishman.

"Well, then, I'll tell you what it manes:—a dragging home, or hauling home, is when a girl of one parish is married to a boy of another, and that 'tis too far for the

young man's people to come to go to the wedding; when she comes home to her husband's friends, they have another wedding, equal to the first, and that's what they call a dragging home."

"Thank you, for your explanation," said Lord Warringdon, "and now let us hear the sequel of your amusing adventure."

"You're extremely polite, my lord; but, indeed, I'm afraid I'm tiring you, and the rest of the company, with such a long rigmarole, about nothing at all."

"Oh, no," exclaimed Mr. Barham, eagerly; "I'm sure every body must like to hear it, 'tis so funny, is'nt it, Miss Wilmot? Now wouldn't you all like to hear the rest of it?" appealing to the company at large.

Mr. Mc Alpine replied to the question by a look of the most ineffable contempt. He deemed laughing one of the seven deadly sins against Romanus and gentility, his two favourite divinities: and, as he never felt inclined to indulge in it himself, af-

firmed that no one who had either head or heart ever did.

"What a soulless creature that Barham must be to laugh as he does; don't you think so, my fair enchantress," said he, still staring and looking tender at his victim, poor Isabel.

"It is very happy for him to be able to laugh," she answered, half crying from vexation.

"Come, come,— the story, the story—you like it, don't you, Lady Anne?" cried Barham.

Lady Anne, from politeness, and Mr. Wilmot, from good-nature, always seemed to enjoy what amused others; they had, therefore, listened as attentively to Father John's adventure as if they had not heard it a dozen times before; and now placidly awaited its conclusion.

Father John proceeded thus:—"All the way coming back, I was thinking how I'd be even with Mrs. Priest for the thrick she

played me. The next morning, before I got up, a message from her to me, begging me to come and have a *collation* after mass, with herself and Father Costelloe. — She always gets share of his breakfast, for she'd go to the dickens for tay; God forgive her, poor woman; I guessed well enough the rason of her civility—'twas just to see how crest-fallen I'd look, after my fine jaunt for nothing; but I nicked her, as you'll see.— 'How are you, Father John?' says she.— 'Very well, thank you, ma'am,' says I. 'How did you lave poor Dan,' says she, putting a comical face on herself. 'I didn't see him at all,' says I. 'How's that?' says she. 'Because I wouldn't be let,' says I. 'How do you mane you wouldn't be let?' says she. 'Only just because Mrs. Wilson and the ministher were within-side, reading to him, out of a thract,' says I. 'Reading to him out of a thract,' says she; 'the Lord save us from all harm!' making the sign of the cross. 'Reading to him! out of a thract!'

cried Father Costelloe, who just then come down stairs from his devotions. 'The apostate! he deserves to be cursed from the altar!'—his face was all manner of colours, and swelled up the bigness of his body a'most. 'Och, then,' says I, 'you may keep your breath to cool your porridge, Mr. Costelloe; for if you were cursing him from Sunday morning till Saturday night, he wouldn't care a pinch of snuff about yourself or your curses.' 'The bastely turncoat,' said Mrs. Priest, pouring out a cup of elegant strong tay for herself. 'Not care about me nor my curses!' cries Father Costelloe, mighty displeased. 'I request, sir, you'll spake more respectfully when you address your suparior.' 'How will ye have me spake respectful, when I'm spaking the way Protestants spake?' 'You were spaking of one of my flock, sir; you don't call them Protestants, I suppose,' says he, as mad as could be. 'Not all of 'em—only Dan Murphy; he's as black a new light as Mrs. Wil-

son, or the minister himself, by this time,' says I. 'I don't b'lieve any such thing,' says he. 'Oh very well, Mr. Costelloe, you needn't if you don't like.' So I said no more, but sat down to my collation. I was mighty fitagued after my duties that morning; but Father Costelloe was too mad to ate a bit. 'Pray what rasons did the turncoat give for his apostacy?' 'I wasn't let see him at all,' says I; 'but his wife tould me he turned partly because he liked the Protestants, and partly to spite us.' 'Spite *us!* What does that mean? He must mean to spite you, Mr. Molloy—Youv'e been negligent of your duty, sir.' 'Faith, I havn't, Mr. Costelloe; and 'tisn't me he means, but yourself, that's to say, Mrs. Priest.' 'Me!' says she, trembling, and turning as white as a sheet, for she's greatly in dread of displasing Father Costelloe, and no blame to her; 'What have I to do with a villian of his kind turning Protestant?' 'I don't know,' said I, 'whether he tells thruth or no, but

the rason he gives is that you refused a son of his liquor, on score; and himself and his son swore, by this and that, they'd be revenged on you and Father Costelloe, and cheat you out of his funeral.' 'You unfortunate woman!' said Father Costelloe, looking at her as if he would ate her up alive—and she shaking like a lafe. 'Oh! Father Costello, dear,' says she, 'forgive me this once. Oh! for the sake of ——' 'Go! this minute and ask Dan Murphy's pardon, and his son's, and tell 'em theyr'e welcome to every dhrop of liquor in your house, whether they pay for it or not.' If you seen the wry face she made, for she's the greatest skinflint, and the proudest and most concated woman in the parish, in regard of being married to the priest's nephew. 'Why don't you go at once?' says Father Costelloe. 'I'm waiting, sir,' says she, mighty mild, 'just to finish my drop of tay.' 'Your tay, woman,' says he, bouncing off his chair as if he was shot; 'if you don't go this minute,

bit nor sup, tay, nor mate, shall you ever have in my house. What's a drop of ditch-water of its kind, compared to my losing the best funeral in the parish, to say nothing of the poor man's soul, and all by your own fault?' So, away she went, laving her tay after her, and starving with the hunger, all the way to Dan Murphy's, on a pillion; and had to hire a man to sit before her, which vexed her well, I promise you. Nothing could equal the surprise of the Murphys when she began *pullalooing*, and crying *peccavi* for not giving them tick, and offering them every thing in her house for nothing. But when she began talking of Mrs. Wilson and the minister, they thought her going mad entirely; and when the murder came out, at last, back she came to us, fit to be tied, mad, outrageous. 'What made you,' says she, 'have the assurance to make a fool of me, Misthress Priest?' 'One good turn deserves another.' 'I'll tell Father Costello of you,' says she. '*I'll* tell Father

Costello of *you*,' says I; so there then it ended; and there ends my story—gentlemen and ladies, and I'm much endebted to you for your plasing attention."

"It is rather we who are indebted to you, sir," politely observed Lord Warringdon, "I assure you I have been much amused."

"Raally," observed Mc Alpine, to Isabel, "he ought to be ashamed to say so; a man of Lord Warringdon's habits and education should be suparior to finding amusement in the conversation of a man of no mind; he can have no mind himself."

"I beg your pardon, you happen to be mistaken, twice in a breath; replied Isabel, sharply, "father John has a strong brogue; but he has mind too; and as to Lord Warringdon, he has taste, as well as mind."

"Oh, I believe I must allow him to have taste; for on one point, at laste, we agree—that of admiring the same lady—

but, now, with respect to the other quaalification: a great dale depends upon what would be our different definitions of a man of mind; What would you define a man of mind to be?"

"Oh, I'm a bad hand at definitions:" answered Isabel, carelessly.

"What a libel on you own intellectual powers!" cried Mr. Mc Alpine, "you that shine aqually in the flowery fields of the imagination, or the sublime heights of the understanding. Come now; you must not be afraid of me; and you must have a little more confidence in yourself:" he continued, tenderly encouraging her supposed timidity —"Come, fair Isabel, I'm waiting for your definition."

"A definition of what?" enquired Lord Warringdon, who, for the first time that evening, found an opportunity of seating himself near Isabel. He had more than once previously endeavoured to make his way to her, but had been constantly inter-

rupted *en route* by lady Anne, who always contrived, just on those occasions, to have something particular to say to him; he could not imagine how it all happened.

Are our readers more sagacious than his lordship? But, accustomed as he was, in all things, great or small, to have his own way, opposition, however unintentional, or accidental, irritated his impatience, and confirmed into determinate will what had originally been, perhaps, but a caprice. Each time, therefore, that lady Anne (even though but accidentally as he supposed) had intercepted him, he grew but still more resolved to accomplish his aim of the moment; in the meanwhile, he glanced at Isabel the oftener, because he could not at once make up to her; and thus noticed in her something of interest, which otherwise must have escaped him. He remarked her listless, pre-occupied air; he remarked that she never voluntarily addressed her companion, and that when

obliged, from politeness to reply to his observations, her eyes were directed to the floor, or to the ceiling, or to father John, or to Mr. Barham; to any, or every point, nay, flittingly to himself, in fact, rather than to the face of the person who was addressing her; and now the viscount's curiosity became augmented anew, and he watched her attentively.

It was evident that Isabel desired to be free of her companion; she did not, however, pout or toss her head, in manifestation of her feelings; an occasional contraction of her expressive brow alone betrayed her impatience of the constraint imposed upon her; indicating even vexation, only just so far as became one whose mind was as polished as her manners. For the first time Lord Warringdon looked with interest upon an unmarried woman, who was not an heiress. He had seen Isabel much more brilliant in beauty than upon that evening; but he had never *felt* her to be so loveable;

asked, as has been mentioned—"A definition of what?" and the radiant smile with which she welcomed him, were not lost upon so acute an observer of female nature as Lord Warringdon.

"Her cheek is not pale now," thought he, "nor does she turn away her eyes when she looks at *me*. Her look is, indeed, timid, but not avoiding."

Isabel felt that the words of his question were nothing—but its tone much. Isabel felt this, and her face beamed with joy and intelligence.

"The statue of Pygmalion," thought he, "warmed into life!"

But Isabel answered his question. "Mr. Mc Alpine insists on my defining a man of mind; the idea of asking a woman for a definition! to require us to imprison our vague, fleeting, impalpable, and often, as men say, irrational impressions, and imaginings within the limit of a cold, precise,

philosophical rule. I appeal to you, now, is it not unfair?"

"Mr. Mc Alpine, don't let her off," said Lord Warringdon, "a definition from her would be *impayable*—there would be such sweet—"

"Confusion! you were going to say," interrupted Isabel, laughing—"so I'll save you the confusion of finishing a sentence so courageously begun."

"No!" said he, "such sweet freshness and feeling, and—"

"Nonsense—" again interrupted Isabel. "But it is quite true, you must never expect anything precise, or raisonné, in our ideas. We are nothing but 'a bundle of sympathies,' you know, creatures who never think according to reason, but according to feeling: in one word, women think with their hearts."

"They could not think with anything half so good," rejoined Lord Warringdon—"*allons commençez.*"

Isabel laughed again, and shook her head. Mr. Mc Alpine was inexpressibly gratified at the change that had taken place in her manner, since Lord Warringdon had interrupted their tête à tête.

"She feels more at ase now, that she's no longer alone with me. How soon one can see when a woman raally loves—the very manes she takes to conceal her passion betrays it—come now," said he, in a tone half-tender, half-playful — "come, I insist on your definition; I'll not take the laste excuse."

Just at this moment, very much to Mr. Mc Alpine's annoyance, Maria joined the group—she had committed Mr. Barham to the safe guardianship of father John, her zealous ally on all occasions, and her indefatigable *proneur;* being, therefore, relieved, for a season at least, from such close application to her own interests, she was willing to dispose of a few moments' leisure to her sister's advantage.

"I wish," thought she, "that Mc Alpine would take himself off, and leave Warringdon and Isabel together;" and, aware of Mc Alpine's refined antipathy to the love of jesting, and ridicule of sentiment, she judged that her own presence would most effectually secure his departure.

"Well, good people," said she, "what high and weighty matters are you discussing here? Isabel, I see, is picking her glove to pieces, so I conclude she's the umpire chosen to decide on the contending opinions of Great Britain and Ireland. Now, my advice to you is, to say out at once, boldly, yes, or no, whatever may be the point at issue. Better to offend either or both, (your pardon, gentlemen,) than spoil a pair of Paris gloves."

"Your tariff of our worth is certainly highly flattering;" observed Lord Warringdon, smilingly.

"Oh! I don't profess to be polite:" replied Maria, "you must know I'm odd,

and odd people are never expected to be civil; and you can't think what a comfort that is. But come! what's the subject of your contestation? let us see if I can't settle it, as fairly and more fearlessly than Isabel. Love, politics, religion, or literature? under which of these four grand divisions of squabbling have you ranged yourselves for battle, heroes of white Albion and green Erin?"

"Our conversation has nothing to do with any of the topics you have enumerated; neither was it a dispute, but a discussion;" observed Mc Alpine, annoyed at Maria's jesting manner of treating all his favourite subjects: "your sister is going to oblige me (if you'll allow her to speak,) with her idaas of a man of mind."

"Well, Isabel—proceed, I entreat—I'm all attention;" said Maria, assuming an attitude of mock-gravity, which enraged Mc Alpine, but made Lord Warringdon laugh. "Come, Isabel," she ran on, per-

ceiving that her sister still remained silent, "enlighten us with your wisdom."

"Nonsense, Maria," said Isabel; "I have already told these gentlemen that I never could define any thing; and I'm quite tired of having to repeat the same thing so often."

"So you won't oblige me?" murmured Mr. Mc Alpine, in a tone of tender reproach.

"I did not think," observed Lord Warringdon, "you were so unpersuadable."

"What stupid creatures men are," resumed Maria; "you never can guess a woman's real motive for doing, or not doing, any one given thing. Here's my poor, guileless, innocent sister, accused of disobligingness by one gentleman, and of unpersuadableness by another, two most cruel and undeserved charges; for she is dying to oblige the one, and could be persuaded to anything by the other; while the motive for her silence is simply this: she

fears that her description of what she imagines to be an interesting man may not sufficiently appear a fancy portrait; and that, therefore, one or the other of you may think he discerns his own features in the *beau ideal* sketch of her imagination."

"I do wish," said Isabel, blushing very deeply and looking extremely offended; "I do wish, Maria, you would not speak as you do, without thinking; Mr. Mc Alpine, of course, knows you are only jesting; but Lord Warringdon will really think that—" she stopped abruptly, aware how ill-judged was any comment on Maria's speech, and how much consciousness of its truth her very anxiety betrayed. Maria, who never talked at random, had contemplated this very result; and, having attained it, and attracted Lord Warringdon's attention, she now stepped in to her sister's aid.

"Mr. Mc Alpine, since Isabel will not oblige you, I will. Now, I define a man of mind to be the man who has a mind for

me, and that's what I call a jewel of a definition;" she went on, mimicking father John's intonations.

Isabel and Lord Warringdon laughed, but Mr. Mc Alpine looked at her with ineffable disgust, as he muttered to himself—

"The idaa of any woman confessing such utter feminine degradation and want of sentiment! She's an abominable creature."—

But though Maria's jest upon so sacred a subject had displeased Mr. Mc Alpine, it delighted Mr. Barham; who, on hearing the laugh, came flying across the room to enquire its cause.

"Oh—bravo! oh! how well you do mimic Mr. Molly! 'tis so like;" and he sprang about the room in delight.

"What's that you're all laughing at?" enquired father John.

"Oh! something so droll, but I can't tell *you* what, because you might be cross."

"Not he!" cried Maria; father John is never cross at anything *I* say or do; are you, father John?"

"Ah, you rogue, I guess well what you're doing; telling some diverting lie of me; but you're welcome," added he, looking kindly at his favourite; "you're welcome, whatever you say."

"He's very near it, is'nt he, Miss Wilmot?" asked Mr. Barham: "I'll tell him, shall I? yes I will. Miss Wilmot was giving an imitation of you, Mr. Molly; so like you'd have died yourself to hear her!" and he ran to join the priest.

"I wouldn't doubt her," replied the good humoured father John; tisn't the first time she done it, I'll engage; no, nor it won't be the last time either."

"Did you hear what she said about the man of mind, Mr. Molly?"

"A man of what mind?" enquired father John.

"Oh, not a man of any particular

mind—only a man of mind in general, you know."

"Faith, I do not know," said father John.

Maria perceiving one gentleman could not understand, nor the other explain, took upon herself the office of interpreter. When she had done—

"Ha! ha! ha! upon my word, that's an excellent idea of a man of mind:" praised father John, shaking his plump sides.—"I'll tell you one thing, Miss Maria, —whoever has a mind for you, will shew he has sense, at any rate, to choose the pleasantest crature from this to yourself, whoever the others may be; that's what I call a fine, hearty, sinsible young woman:" he continued, turning to Mr. Barham—"one that says out at once whatever comes into her head, without throubling herself what any body thinks of her; and that's the girl for my money! and a pleasant crature;

always saying one droll thing or other, enough to make a corpse laugh."

"Well, do you know I thought she was very droll, though I never heard any one say she was reckoned so—I begin to understand Irish humour, I think, though I havn't been long here, yet; but is she as droll as you are, Mr. Molly?"

"Droll as me, is it? Troth she is, and far droller than ever I will be."

"But has she such nice stories as that about the funeral, Mr. Molly? I wish you'd mention what stories she does tell—will you?"

"I don't remember, upon my word, exactly, at the present moment, any story of her's, in perticklar; but, indeed, I nearly lost my life by a joke of hers onct."

"Oh, did you?" exclaimed Mr. Barham, in ecstasy;—"do tell me how?"

"I was ating a potaty, hot out of the pot, one day, below in the kitchen, and she came in, I forget for what, now; and she

to be choked; and would n
bit again, I'm sure, only s
between the shoulders, and
taty out of me."

"Oh, how funny!" cried
"how I wish I had been t
have so liked to have see
Mr. Molly."

"I never seen the aqual o
he can't even call my ow
muttered Father John.
'twould be the same to you
seen some one else choking.

"Oh! I dont mean, yo
should like you to be cho
only it must have looked
you all black in the face, a
slapping your back! Whe

"Well! a story of your own, then, Mr. Molly! Do pray tell me something funny."

"I hav'nt a funny story in the world, Mr. Barham, that I hav'nt told you already."

Poor Mr. Barham looked exceedingly disappointed.

"Well, the same over again!—Will you, Mr. Molly, if you please?"

"Ah! my God! was there ever any poor man so persecuted as I am, and all on account of the bad luck I had to tell him the thrick I played on Mrs. Priest! One would think I had nothing to do, from morning to night, but remembering funny stories to divart him. I wish I was in my bed out of his way. Miss Maria, my honey," cried he, "I want to spake to you a moment—whisper. This young man is killing me; I can't stand him any longer, my pet."

"Why, what is he doing, Father John?"

"Bothering me to death for funny storries, as he calls them."

"Well; can't you tell him some?"

"What else have I been doing all night? but, any how, I can't stop now, for I have to read my office before I go to bed, you know; and it's getting late; so God bless you;" and Father John stole quietly out of the room, to the great discomfiture of Mr. Barham:—Maria, the only person of the party who could supply the place of Father John, being engaged talking with Mr. Mc Alpine, Lord Warringdon, and her sister.—Aware, in fact, of Mc Alpine's horror of any thing savoring of a jest on any subject, but more especially on one of a poetical kind, she had sent back Mr. Barham to Father John's charge, on a quest for "funny stories," and indulged herself in allusions to them, purely for the purpose of scaring away Mr. Mc Alpine, and leaving Lord Warringdon and her sister tête à tête. But this was the more difficult to accomplish, as Mr. Mc Alpine had never been so pleasingly impressed with the "idūa of Isabel's attachment," as

upon that evening.—"Her constrained and timid manner when alone with me—her gaiety and animation when Warringdon joined us—her charming reluctance to define a man of mind, for fear I should penetrate her sacret, and who it was that rāalized her romantic idāa of perfection; and then, her sweet agitation at her sister's indelicate allusion to the rāal motive for her refusing to oblige me;—every thing conspires to give me the delightful assurance that I am fondly, tenderly, and devotedly beloved by this fascinating crature."—Such was the tenor of Mr. Mc Alpine's cogitation, as he arose to effect his escape from the coarseness and vulgarity of Maria's conversation.

"I am going to lave you for a moment," he said to Isabel; and, accompanying this announcement, at once afflicting and consolatory (inasmuch as the intimation of his departure was softened by the assurance of his speedy return), by a look of mingled triumph and tenderness, at the one sister,

and of unmingled and unmeasured abhorrence at the other—he dragged his lazy length across the room, and seated himself near Lady Anne, who welcomed him with one of her most seducing smiles, in which Mr. Mc Alpine read delight at his attention to her daughter, and a strong, though vain, effort to conceal that delight. Isabel and Lord Warringdon also caught this expression of Lady Anne's countenance, and discerned another feeling mingled with it;—namely, displeasure towards Lord Warringdon, for having, by his *gaucherie*, interrupted the more than probable termination of Mr. Mc Alpine's assiduities, that evening; and also against her daughter, for having preferred a flirtation with one gentleman, to a declaration from the other. And now, for the first time in his life, Lord Warringdon beheld a mother angry, and a daughter frightened, at his assiduities;—for Isabel grew pale and constrained as she had previously done, when talking with, or rather

when talked to, by Mc Alpine, although the Viscount felt that the same cause did not now produce the similar effect. The conversation, hitherto so flowing and animated, became broken and spiritless.

"Your Father and I," he observed, after a pause of some seconds, "are going to ride to-morrow to a Mr. Molony's, who has votes—Will you come?"

"Maria will, I dare say."

"That is truly an Irish answer," he said, laughing. "I did not ask whether Maria would, but whether *you* would—No diplomatic subterfuges will avail you with me, however. I demand an honest answer;—Yes—or No—"

"No"—replied Isabel, laughing—but Lord Warringdon perceived that her laugh was affected, and also divined that, although she said the No, so courageously, her heart sunk because she dared not say—Yes.

"I thought you liked riding?" looking disappointed at her refusal.

"So I do," said she, trying to seem perfectly indifferent.

"It must be, then, that you don't like your proposed companions; which of them is the obnoxious person? Mr. Wilmot or myself?"

A slight tremor of her voice did not escape him, as she answered with affected carelessness,—"Neither one nor the other; my only motive for declining your invitation is, that it will not be in my power to accept it."

"So you won't come and *help* me, as you have done heretofore, to win the hearts of the men of ——? But I am quite in the black-book, I see; you'll neither speak to me, nor look at me, ever since the arrival of your mama's friend, the adoring, adorable, and, doubtless, adored, Mr. Mc Alpine."

Isabel darted a look of indignant surprise at him, and, rising abruptly, left the room. In her look he read something more than astonishment, or even displeasure,

something that expressed, as distinctly as if she had given utterance to the feeling—"You are ungenerous in saying this; for you not only know perfectly well that I abominate Mc Alpine, but you also are aware that I like yourself."

Lord Warringdon dreamt that night that he was in love with Isabel Wilmot, and when he awoke, he did not laugh at his dream.

"If she had a hundred or even fifty thousand pounds," thought he—*If* is a great peace-maker in love as well as war.—When a man or woman comes to an if, there are hopes or fears, as the case may be, that all is not sound "in the state of Denmark."

END OF VOL. II.

B. BENSLEY, PRINTER.

CANVASSING.

THE

MAYOR OF WIND-GAP

AND

CANVASSING.

BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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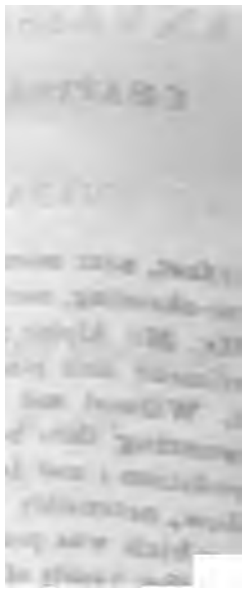
1835.



CANVASSING.

CHAPTER I.

AFTER breakfast, next morning, Mr. Barham set off grouse-shooting, escorted by Pat Murphy; and Mr. Mc Alpine remained at home to talk sentiment and read Lord Byron to Isabel; Mr. Wilmot and Lord Warringdon were just mounting their horses on their canvassing expedition; and Isabel was standing at the window, ostensibly to admire her father's Arab, which was prancing and curvetting with all the vanity of conscious beauty, never suspecting that part, at least, of the admiration he excited was owing to the chance of his having that day for his rider

his master's guest, rather than his master himself.

Lord Warringdon looked up at the window, and smiled when he saw Isabel, "Wish me success," cried he, as he kissed his hand, and rode off.

"Come away from the window, my dear!" said Lady Anne. "Lord Warringdon can mount his horse, I suppose, without your superintendence. I must say, I never saw such conduct in any young woman, circumstanced as you are;—engaged, I may say, to one man, and yet carrying on a flirtation with another. I really have not patience with such want of sense, and want of honour. I have not the slightest doubt that Mc Alpine would have proposed for you last night, had you behaved with common decency; but just as he was making up his mind to speak, you set on foot a trashy conversation with Lord Warringdon, who has no more serious intentions about you than he has about me; he is just laughing at you,—*that* you may rely upon. Maria," said she, turning to her other daughter, "I shall be obliged by your talking to your sister on this business; perhaps you may have more

influence on her than I have." And so saying she quitted the room with an air of displeasure.

"I am a miserable creature!" exclaimed Isabel.

"Because mamma won't let you look out of the window at Lord Warringdon?" asked her sister, laughing.

Isabel coloured. "I care very little about Lord Warringdon, as it happens," said she, in a tone of disdain. It is not necessary, I suppose, to be in love with him, in order to be miserable at the thought of being forced to marry Mc Alpine. Maria, if you knew how I loathe this horrid Mc Alpine, I am sure you would pity me,—even mamma would. I will tell her that I really cannot marry him; shall I, Maria?"

"Why, as for that, I don't see what use there would be in any such avowal. You know she made poor Louisa marry a man old enough to be her grand-father; and that all Louisa's protestations of disgust were nothing in the balance against fifty thousand per annum, and a peerage. The grand object of mamma's life has been, you know, to

[illegible] advantageously. We [illegible] such of us as have [illegible] life,—that will not be [illegible] she does her duty, she gets [illegible] and leaves all the rest, like [illegible] Providence. It would be, [illegible] needless to tell her that you dislike Mr. [illegible] already, that you do [illegible] marrying him, you must marry somebody else that is your only chance of escape."

"Indeed! only me I have none, then," exclaimed Isabel despairingly.

"Yes, you have!" replied Maria, who [illegible] her sister to utter desperation. "Yes, you have a chance, and a brilliant one I am sure Lord Warringdon admires you: whether he is sufficiently rich to marry you, is another story;—try what you can effect with him;—but take care that mamma shall see nothing of your proceedings, or she would stop you at once; for she fears losing Mr. Alpine, and quarrelling with Warringdon. Besides, to tell you the truth, she has taken it into her head, that the admiration is rather on your side than his, and that you may make yourself ridiculous, and ——"

"I am really much indebted to her, for her flattering estimation of me," interrupted Isabel, highly affronted; "I am not quite mean enough to fall in love with a man who cares nothing about me; nor silly enough to fancy he does, if he really does not.—Maria, too, sees that he admires me," thought she to herself; "my wishes have not, then, quite deceived me, and I *have* a hope, not only of escaping Mc Alpine, but of securing the only man I ever really loved."

Isabel did not give utterance to these thoughts. There never had existed between the sisters that habit of confidence on every subject which forms the chief bond of love between sisters in general. They lived together, indeed, rather on the footing of intimate companions than of trusting and trusted friends; neither of them, however, being deficient in affection for the other. They liked one another better than any other women of their acquaintance; they laughed or reasoned together as the case might be; but they seldom talked. And, perhaps, this constraint was natural between two persons whose ways of thinking were so dissimilar. Isabel, how-

ever, we must add, felt more cautious of Maria than Maria of her. Maria would much oftener speak of her "designs," as she called them, than Isabel of her attachments. But although, on the present occasion, Isabel hid her secret thoughts from her sister, Maria, who had a portion of her mother's power of divination, saw what was passing in mind;—saw that her own hint about Lord Warringdon was extremely acceptable, and would be forthwith acted upon. Nor had Isabel ever before thought so highly of Maria's good sense and penetration as she now did. Aware, however, of Maria's objection to "love talk," she changed the subject to one more interesting to her sister.

"What sort of a young man is Mr. Barham?"

"Quite a fool," replied Maria, composedly.

"I wonder, then, Maria, why you should waste your time talking to him."

"I do not waste my time at all;—I put it out to the best interest imaginable,—cent. per cent., or rather thousand per cent. He has eighteen thousand a year, and a fine place in Leicestershire."

"Yes, but what is his fine place to us?"

"His fine place is nothing to either of us, at present, I grant you; it never *will* be any thing to you, I know, inasmuch as you strike at nobler quarry;—but it will be a great deal, I expect, to me."

"Why, Maria, you surely would not marry that silly boy?"

"Wouldn't I? *naboklish*,* as Father John says; I wish, my dear, I had the refusing of him, if he was twice the fool he is,—a difficult thing, by the bye."

"Dear Maria, how can you, with your strength and variety of intellect, seriously contemplate marrying an idiot?"

"Isabel," said Maria, for once in her life speaking with emotion, "what has this intellect you talk of effected for me? have not all the pretty fools, or ugly heiresses, who started into life with me, been married before me? Show me the man who marries a woman *because* she has intellect. He may forgive it in a pretty woman,—he certainly will in a rich one,—but she who is neither wealthy nor

* Never mind.

handsome, and yet possesses it, how does she fare?"

"Why, my dear Maria, I never met a clever man yet who did not say that he preferred your conversation to that of all the women he knew."

"Psha, my dear Isabel, what care I about their preferring my conversation? do they prefer myself? Let us come to the point,—which of them has proposed for me? for, after all, disguise the thing as we please, that is the grand object to which our perfections of any kind, and the admiration they excite, naturally tend. You remember the Frenchman who, whenever he heard of a beautiful poem, or heroic action, used to say, '*Tout cela, depuis le Marechal de France, jusqu'au Saretien, se fait indubitablement pour avoir de quoi mettre dans la bouche, et accomplir les lois de la mastication selon moi, est le vrai resultat des choses les plus rares de ce monde.*' Now, for 'mastication,' read 'marriage,' and the Frenchman's opinions are mine. Does an empty compliment on my talents repay me, think you, for the trouble I have taken in cultivating them? Clever men "*converse*" with me, 'tis true, but they make

love to others, and, what is wore, marry them. So that I have long ago seen that mere cleverness would never answer; and, from the moment I became sure of *that*, I began to say and do strange, sometimes startling, things, till I made them call me odd, in London; and till I was followed by all the fools about town, whom my reputation for mere talent had, in the first instance, frightened away. Well, I came home here; and here I play the buffoon, making people, like that poor silly Barham, laugh, in order to produce effect, in any way; so that, if I *do* marry, I shall owe my success, not to my talents, but to my absurdity;—not to my sense, but to my nonsense. No; my dear Isabel, credit me, talent is infinitely in a woman's way. What a pity I was not born a man, and in good stirring times; then I should have made Europe ring with my name; now, all my energies can get me nothing but a husband, and that husband a fool."

"Maria, you deserve a better fate than that," exclaimed Isabel, struck by the energy, misplaced as it was, of her sister's mind; and, suddenly perceiving the secret spring of actions, and of opinions, which had so often

puzzled her, in all her previous examinations of Maria's character.

"Bah!" said Maria, "one fate is as good as another, in the long run; a cloudy morning may change into a bright noon;—it may be very pleasant to be married to a fool, for any thing you or I know to the contrary; and, suppose it should not, why, in a hundred years time it will be all the same to me, whether I had been married to Lord Byron or Mr. Barham; or whether I had set the world in a blaze, like Helen, or Cleopatra; or had been shewn about at a fair, as a rival to the pig-faced lady. At the epoch I allude to, Mrs. Barham and Lady Warrington will look alike," continued she, playfully taking her sister by the chin: "A little courage is all that is necessary for any thing: do you not recollect how much easier it was, when we were both children, to persuade me to have a tooth out, than you? you would cry; and mamma would say, 'do, my sweet Isabel; you will be so much prettier, you know, when that ugly tooth is out, and that the others have room to range; and your mouth will be quite spoiled, if you keep it in; indeed, it

will, my pretty:' but, still you cried, and wrung your little hands, in an agony of indecision, as to which of the two apalling misfortunes you would prefer,—the pain of losing a tooth, or the horror of injuring your beauty."

Isabel laughed:—"Oh, yes, I remember all those pangs of mine so well! and you, on the contrary, used to submit, with the greatest apparent composure, to a similar operation."

"Yes, chiefly because I had no beauty to lose; and mamma needed only to remind me of all the inconvenience I had already suffered, from the aching tooth, and inform me of all that was yet in store for me; and how I should be kept awake all night by it, and, consequently, rendered unable to attend to my lessons in the morning; and that, then it was likely my cousin, little Anne Rochford, would get before me. This was enough—I made up my mind at once; for I could have better borne to have every tooth in my head dragged out, than to have let 'my cousin little Anne Rochford get before me.' And upon exactly such a principle, I have acted through life. When once convinced that a certain object is necessary to my welfare, I

aim at that object, steadily, unswervingly—there may be difficulties accompanying its pursuits—unpleasant, nay, painful ones; I disregard them; I overlook the means, and contemplate only the result. And, hearken, Isabel. I have applied this principle more especially to my matrimonial speculation. This instant, I would take *anybody* who could make *somebody* of me; for you know, as well as I do, that a woman who is not married is nobody. I heard my mother say this first: I looked about me, and saw that she was right—and I determined to marry, and become somebody as soon a possible. And my first stroke was for a distinguished marriage—but I was checked somewhat in my aspirations after distinction by overhearing the same lady deplore to my aunt, "how plain poor Maria was, and how sadly difficult it would be to marry her." Now, upon hearing this awkward fact, a girl of much sensibility, or mind, (as your adoring Mr. Mc Alpine might say,) would have gone to her room, and cried herself into fits—I acted more wisely. I asked mamma if any thing could supply the want of beauty in a girl? 'Yes,' answered she, 'ac-

complishments, fashion, and above all, knowledge of the world;' well, I worked away, day and night, at the accomplishments; and I studied human character carefully—and shall I tell you what has been the result of this latter branch of my pursuits? dislike and contempt of the men—disgust and contempt of the women."

"With such an opinion of society, I should be indifferent as to the place I was to occupy in it;" observed Isabel.

"Bad! bad logic, Isabel:" rejoined Maria, "ambition, whether its object be the acquisition of an empire, or of a husband, is yet in its nature pretty much the same. Cæsar had not, I dare say, a more favourable opinion of his fellows than I have, yet he spent a life to win a name amongst them. Perhaps this very contempt of your species encreases your desire for distinction; for, who can reconcile himself to be nothing in the eyes of those who are already nothing in his? But, to go on with my autobiography. I saw that, to attain my object, I must not boggle at a few disagreeable adjuncts—I determined, therefore, to take the first tolerable match that God

might send, and not be particular about a little folly or ugliness—old age or bad temper —I was not fastidious, you will acknowledge; yet, was I successful? I had sense, and I had not beauty—so alas! no one came a wooing to me. Oh, how I have moved heaven and earth to gain even Mc Alpine."

"Dear Maria," cried Isabel, "I wonder the very thought of him did not make you sick."

"I dare say it might have had that effect, if I had allowed myself to think at all about him, but I thought only on Mc Alpine castle, and ten thousand a year! a carriage and servants of my own; in fact, of an establishment! And that's the only way to manage on those occasions. Never allow yourself to think of the man at all, only of the fortune. And now, does not this *exposé* of my present position and future expectations convince you that the distinguished talents you are graciously pleased to attribute to me, my fair sister, have been hitherto, and are likely always to remain, useless ornaments? and, therefore, that it would be the height of folly in me, to object to the folly of Mr. Barham."

Before Isabel had time to reply the door opened suddenly, and the identical person of whom they were talking bounded into the room.

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, is it true?"

"Is what true?" counter-questioned Maria.

"Is it true that you are going to have a ball?"

"Quite true;" she answered.

"Oh what fun it will be—an Irish ball—how capital;" and he spun about the room like a tetotum. "Pat Murphy told me all about it; but I thought he was only trotting me; and lady Anne has been so kind as to ask me to stay here as long as I like. Mc Alpine Castle, she tells me, is such a stoopid place—no fun at all going on there—I'm so glad I was overturned on my way to it."

"So am I, too;" thought Maria.

"Do you know," continued Mr. Barham, "that I think Mr. Mc Alpine rather stoopid himself? I never should take him for an Irishman; he never makes one laugh, does he, now? I'm so glad I have come here, instead of going to him — I hope you will have

the ball soon—guess how many quadrilles I danced once?"

"Nine;" answered Maria.

"What do you say to twenty-four?" cried he, triumphantly, "and wasn't a bit tired afterwards."

"Bless me! I never heard of such a thing:" said Maria, looking astonished, "I declare I think you must be jesting, Mr. Barham."

"Oh no; quite serious, I assure you, so you see, I shall do capitally in Ireland, shant I? you must know I fancy myself quite an Irishman already. I asked Pat Murphy and Mr. Molly, if they did not think so, and they said they did. Would you believe, that I know all your servants' names already? such funny names! they made me laugh so. When I go back to England, I intend bringing some Irish servants with me, just to make me laugh, and remind me of the pleasant time I am spending here."

"Please God," thought Maria, "you shall take something back that will still better remind you of "the pleasant time you are spending here:" she added aloud, "is this

the only province of Ireland that you have visited?"

"Oh no, I have been all over it. I have been to the Giant's Causeway, such a funny place as it is—such lots of rocks, and things heaped one over the other—and the lakes of Killarney; I saw them too; I caught some trout in one of them, and broiled them on the arbutus myself—I wouldn't let anybody assist me—such fun as I had—I fell into the Lake and was nearly drowned, but the guide jumped after me and caught me just as I was sinking, it was very good-natured of him, wasn't it? so I gave him twenty pounds—he deserved that I am sure, and a great deal more, for saving me—did he not, Miss Wilmot?"

"Indeed, he did, treble the sum;" responded Maria, with alacrity—"you paid him, however, very generously, I am sure he gave you abundance of blessings."

"Oh yes, such a lot of 'em—he told me I was some king or potentate in disguise; and when I told him I was only an English gentleman, travelling about just for a lark—he said he wished all English gentlemen were like me—and that I was the truth of a gentleman—

my chums at King's when I go back to Cambridge, about my Irish duel! they will call me Paddy Barham; don't you think they will, Miss Wilmot?—I hope they will—I would give any thing to be called Paddy Barham."

"But sometimes," said Maria, "people are killed in Irish duels; men shoot, as well as laugh, unfortunately, in this merry, murderous country of ours."

"I should not like to be killed at all," said Mr. Barham, looking rather put out;—"I should hate to die;—I havn't had much fun yet; such a tiresome stoopid thing as it is to be dead!"

r. Barham paused a few moments, struck with the possibility of so funny a thing as an Irish duel terminating in so stoopid a thing as death.

"But, after all, Miss Wilmot," said he, resuming his usual expression of inexpressiveness, "after all, very few persons *are* killed in duels—they are only wounded, mostly.—Now, you must know, I should not mind being wounded at all. When I was at Eton, my master (the boy I was fag to, you know) used to promise me a guinea for every pin I should

be, as in the present instance, at himself,—"I always thought the jig was the National dance of Ireland.'

"Among the peasantry," observed Maria.

"Well, what then will you dance?" enquired Mr. Barham.

"Quadrilles and waltzes."

"Quadrilles and waltzes!" he repeated in a tone of disappointment—"Psha!—I'm tired of *them;* tiresome, stoopid things!—I'm so sorry! I made sure of such fun! Why, I might as well be in England, if you dance nothing but quadrilles and waltzes!—To be in Ireland, and not dance jigs—how tiresome! I have been three weeks in Ireland, and I have not seen a jig danced yet!"

"Have you not, really?—I'll see what I can do for you at the ball, then; but I can't promise. To tell you the truth, I'm afraid all our rank and fashion will go into fits at the notion of such a thing as jigs any where but in a poor man's cabin, or a gentleman's kitchen. But at any rate, you can both dance and see them danced, to your heart's content, if you don't mind going into the servant's-hall—

I'll send for Paddy the pi
like, for this evening."

"Oh thank you! than
Wilmot!" his eyes already
delight, as he exclaimed,—
Irish piper! oh, what cap
piper! — and Irish servan
jigs!—I would not have
Ireland for a thousand pou
declare!"

"Nor would I have ha
double the sum!" said Mari

Just at this moment, a
red-headed boy, peeped in,
veyed the room, was prep
again, exclaiming, "She i
he was stopped by Maria.

"What are you looking
"Lookin' every place fo
Miss; an' can't find her."

"Why—what do want of
"The masther, Miss, tha
"So, my father is retu
Isabel, hastily throwing asid
taken up on Mr. Barham's
not expect him back so soo
vation, had it been the fait

her thoughts, would have run thus—"So, Lord Warringdon is returned? I did not expect him back so soon!" "Where is my father, Michelleen?"

"Below, in the kitchen," Miss.

"What is he doing there?"

"Seeing afther the English Lord—mysel' never can't remimber the name he has on him, Miss."

"Seeing after him," repeated Isabel—"how do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing very pertickler, Miss, only a fall he got from his horse."

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Isabel, hastily—"Is he hurt? Michelleen, can't you answer?"

"Troth! I don't know, Miss; but I dare say he is—Paudeen tould me he heerd Misther Kelly telling Tom Landnigan, Misther Mc Alpine's man, that Pat Murphy said 'twas Mrs. Mc Donogh's opinion he'd never ate a bit again."

"Nonsense, Michelleen," interrupted Maria, perceiving Isabel grow deadly pale,—"What rigmarole story have you got at there?—

What does Mrs. Mc Donogh know about the matter?"

"Facks, I don't know, Miss, but every one in the counthry does be sayin' Mrs. Mc Donogh is mighty knowledgeable in regard of physics an' cures—How well she said, whin Barney Sullivan's horse was clifted an' smashed intirely, that *he'd* niver ate a bit agin, Miss?"

"Yes—but Lord Warringdon has not been clifted nor smashed intirely, like Barney Sullivan's house! so Mrs. Mc Donogh may be wrong after all, Michelleen. But, pray, why didn't you say at once that he was hurt?"

"Sure the masther didn't bid me, Miss, tell any body but my Lady."

"The master didn't bid you, Michelleen!" cried Maria—"Could'nt your own sense tell you that much, child? So, I suppose if the master happened to fall from his own horse, and wasn't able to speak, you wouldn't tell any body, because, indeed, he didn't bid you?"

"Hubbaboo! I'd *riz* the counthry, let alone the house, if the masther hurted his little finger; not to talk of breaking his bones.

God betixt us an' harum," cried little Michelleen, making the sign of the cross.

"Why, then, didn't you tell us that Lord Warringdon got the fall?" enquired Maria.

"Sure, Miss, I didn't think it signified, in regard of his bein' a foreigner, an'—"

"Didn't think it signified?" cried Isabel, indignantly — "What an ill-natured little creature you must be!"

Michelleen hung his head, and scraped the floor with the largest digit of his not very clean little foot. Mr. Barham was so busy, watching the little Irish boy shifting from one bare mottled leg to another, scratching his head and scraping the floor, while undergoing this interrogatory, that he never observed how much more important a circumstance Miss Isabella Wilmot seemed to consider Lord Warringdon's having fallen from his horse, and "never likely to ate a bit again," than Michelleen thought it.

"Come, Isabel, love," said Maria, "let us go and see how the case really stands."

Michelleen, in high glee at escaping any further examination from the young ladies, scampered off to ascertain, for his own satis-

faction, whether "the English Lord was only kilt, or actually kilt dead;" and Mr. Barham scampered off after Michelleen.

"Don't be frightened, Isabel," said Maria, as she felt her sister's hand tremble on her arm—"you may be certain it is nothing very serious, or my father would have sent no message by that stupid, blundering Michelleen."

Her supposition proved correct. They found Lord Warringdon standing in the midst of a group of idlers, talking to Mr. Wilmot, who was inspecting the letter-bag, just arrived viâ Andy Mr. Donogh, surnamed Andy the Post. The viscount looked a little paler than usual, and his arm was in a sling; otherwise, he did not appear by any means in a state to justify the ominous prediction of Mrs. Mc Donogh, as detailed by Michelleen on Paudeen's authority, which prediction really ran thus:

"'Tis well he was not hurted so he'd never ate a bit again—for there's many a one lost his life upon a smaller provication."

"I'm glad to find you still in the land of the living, my lord, and likely to continue

there;" said Maria — "Michelleen all but buried you."

"Oh, 'tis a mere trifle—" returned Lord Warringdon, smiling, "a sprained wrist only —fortunately, the accident occurred close to the dispensary, so the injury was promptly remedied."

"I hope you do not suffer much pain?" said Isabel, who had begun to recover her self-possession. The tone and look by which these simple words were accompanied left no doubt on the mind of the person to whom they were addressed of the sincerity with which they were uttered—confirmed too as they were by the agitation he had remarked on her first entering the kitchen. What man ever fails to notice the interest he inspires?

"Here are letters for you, my lord!" said Mr. Wilmot.

The party were leaving the kitchen when Barham called after Maria:

"Oh—Miss Wilmot, you are forgetting the Piper."

"Perhaps, as Lord Warringdon has met this accident," replied Maria, "it might be as

well to defer it till another evening—the nois
might be disagreeable to him."

"Oh no—I beg you don't alter your ar-
rangements on my account—the pain is very
trifling, and the Piper will serve rather to
amuse than annoy me."

"You are quite right, Lord Warringdon:"
exclaimed Barham, delighted, "I assure you
a little fun is the best cure in the world for
pain of any kind:" and, so saying, off he
gallopped in search of a messenger, to carry
Maria's mandate to Paddy *Basha*, commanding
his attendance that evening.

CHAPTER II.

"HA!" exclaimed Lord Warringdon, as he cast his eye over the letter just handed him by Mr. Wilmot, "My father tells me that parliament is to be dissolved immediately. What shall I do? this unlucky sprain will prevent my holding a pen, and yet I ought not to lose a moment in addressing the county. Is there any one here who would have the charity to lend me a hand, while I dictate?" said he, looking round on the group.

"You shall have Isabel," said Lady Anne good-humouredly. "She is always her fa-

ther's secretary; and, as he happens to be very lazy, he does not allow her pen much rest, I assure you; and, thanks to such good practice, she has become quite *au fait*,—a capital electioneering address-writing young lady, I can tell you; so here she is, at your service. You have no objection, have you, my love?" she added, in a stage-whisper, to her daughter, while she settled one of her pretty, soft curls. "I'll explain to Mc Alpine, you know, and, I dare say, he will forgive my disposing of you for this morning; so politics and business to-day,—love and Byron to-morrow," she continued, smiling archly. "Well, good people, I will no longer disturb you. Come, my dear Wilmot, you and I are *de trop*, here;—*au revoir*." She nodded good-homouredly, and left the room.

"I have many apologies to make to you," said Lord Warringdon, for having so unceremoniously accepted Lady Anne's offer of your assistance; particularly," added he, smiling sarcastically, "as I understand you have made other arrangements for the day."

"I am not aware of any engagement that I would not willingly have given up, to be of

service to you," replied Isabel, in a faultering tone; but, fearing she had said too much, she added, blushing, "Or, indeed, to any person, under the same circumstances."

"Thank you for that flattering qualification," rejoined the viscount, laughing, and contemplating his fair secretary with all the self-complacency of a gratified, vain man.

"Is your arm comfortable now?" she asked, anxious to escape from his scrutinizing look. "I fancy the sling is rather high;—shall I lower it?"

Her companion felt more than half inclined to have answered the question by touching with his lips the pretty little trembling hand of the fair querist; had she been married, in all probability he would have done so; but, in these days, to kiss a single woman's hand, is tantamount to a declaration. And so the admiring, but prudent, viscount, contented himself with thanking her, in words, for her kindness. "She is a nice creature," thought he; "what a pity she has not money!"

For an hour, or two, the young politicians continued immersed in business. But, as

be satisfied to allow him all the credit due to success and its results, not only from society, but from his very self. He was aware, however, that such devotedness could be expected from a woman only, from a wife, in fact: and where could he find a woman uniting the ability and the affection necessary for such an office? In fact, for more than a year he had been asking himself this question, and in the course of this morning it at length occurred to him that Isabel Wilmot was an answer to it. As for Isabel, her care of the *amour propre* of her companion had been prompted simply by affection;—by the unwilled, but unerring, skill of the heart; yet, had she acted from prudence and calculation, she could not have devised a better plan for advancing her interests. For, in these days of Utilitarianism, when every generous impulse is arrested by a "*cui bono*," the woman who succeeds in impressing a man with the notion that she can be useful to him has presented to his mind an *argumentum at hominem*, that, sooner or later, will work to her advantage, nay, help to get her a husband.

A characteristic of genius is, not that it

we say to the children! Oh, you naughty two!" said she, playfully tapping her daughter's cheek, and Lord Warringdon's shoulder.

"Thus do I disprove your foul calumny," replied he, in the same tone, holding up his address.

"No! have you really finished it? how quick you have been,—admirable!" cried she; "nothing can be better;—so dexterously composed;—no one interest sacrificed to that of another; those who wish that sinecures should be kept, because they have a chance of getting them; and those who wish to have them abolished, because they never expect to profit by them;—those who want the National debt taken off, and those who would like to increase the pension list: those who cry out for Catholic emancipation, and those who insist on keeping up the Protestant ascendancy; each and all may claim Warringdon as their champion. Yes; the gradations of form and colour are skilfully managed, indeed, in this piece of political Mosaic! Bravo, my lord! How clever that girl is!" said she to herself; then, turning to her daughter, "What a capital diplomatist this member of ours will

make; here is finesse enough for an European empire wasted on an Irish county!"

Lady Anne was aware that the great object of Lord Warrington's ambition, for some time past, had been to figure as a cabinet minister. Now she saw him smile, highly gratified.

"I am very much flattered that you appear to have not forgotten that I had an invaluable assistant in your fair daughter," he politely added.

"Not as for my poor Isabel," replied the lady, kissing her daughter's snowy forehead. "I do not imagine that she could have been of any service to you.—No, you are not quite diplomatic enough to persuade me you think that." Then, lowering her voice as she addressed her daughter, "Mc Alpine is in the next room: you may now go and chat with him, love, for he is quite moping and miserable without you."

Lady Anne perceived, with much satisfaction, that Lord Warrington's eyes followed Isabel, as she moved reluctantly out of the room: and when the door closed on her graceful figure, and when he turned round to look at the fire that he appeared in a very bad humour

"Poor Mc Alpine," said she, laughing, has been quite like a fish out of water, all day. My heart smites me for having taken Isabel away from him: but he's so good humoured about it, poor fellow;—the most amiable being in the world."

Lord Warringdon brushed up his dark curls, and leaned back in his chair, with all the nonchalance of an exclusive, listening to an irksome subject.

"What do you think of my son-in-law elect!" said she, after a pause.

"Candidly?" enquired he, with affected indifference.

"Oh, by all means," replied she.

"Candidly, then," I think him a devilish ill-looking, stupid fellow."

"I don't at all agree with you, my lord," said she, with well-acted warmth; "he is the reverse of stupid, he possesses considerable talent; and, as for looks, men never judge fairly of one another, there;—he is quite as well to be liked as the generality of people," glancing somewhat offensively at her companion.

The corners of his lordship's handsome

mouth curled into an expression of quiet disdain. "My dear Lady Anne, recollect I did not obtrude my opinion of Mr. Mc Alpine,—you rather pressed me for it."

Lady Anne shook her foot a few seconds, a gesture Lord Warringdon had remarked in her as indicative of displeasure;—he hummed an opera air. "I should be very much obliged to you, my Lord," she continued, "not to be as candid with my daughter as you have been with myself, in your criticisms upon a person about to become a member of my family. Girls are foolish and romantic, and imagine they must be passionately attached to a man in order to marry him; and I, therefore, make it a personal request that you, in future, keep your opinion of Mr. Mc Alpine to yourself. It might do Isabel irreparable injury, by setting her against him."

"Setting her against Mr. Mc Alpine!" repeated he, sarcastically; "how could that be possible? I understood you to say he was quite the *beau ideal* of your imagination, the quintessence of all perfection, moral and physical."

"Allow me to set you right, my lord,"

replied she, with much offended dignity; "I am perfectly aware that Mr. Mc Alpine is not a Colonel C. in beauty, nor a Lord L. G. in talent; all I said was, that he had as much of both as people in general," laying emphasis on the last words. "And I add this, that he is a most excellent, kind-hearted, high-principled, honourable young man, passionately attached to my daughter, who begins, at length, to appreciate his merit, and to see that she has a much better chance of happiness with him than with a beauty, a genius, or a man of fashion."

"*C'est possible,*" replied his lordship, with an indifference intended to be provoking; "*Moi jé ne dispute jamais, surtout avec les dames,*—will you permit me to touch the bell for my servant? 'tis time to dress for dinner."

Lady Anne bowed stiffly, and Lord Warringdon determined to inform Isabel, the very first opportunity, of his opinion concerning Mr. Mc Alpine, should she, indeed, happen to be ignorant of it.

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Wilmot and Maria, followed

[illegible] Barham, laughing as usual, "ready to [illegible]

[illegible] as she thought that she might [illegible] her usual kindness towards the [illegible] she turned to her husband;—"You [illegible] not seen Lord Warrington's address yet. [illegible] — so really admirable."

"No, I recognise Isabel's touches here," said the fond, indulgent father, pleased at this additional evidence of his daughter's [illegible]

"Yes," said Lady Anne, rising and touching her husband's shoulder, as she leaned [illegible] — "You know Lord Warrington sprained his wrist, and could not write; so it is Isabel's hand-writing: but that does not [illegible]

"No, not to be sure," rejoined Wilmot, understanding his wife's hint;—"'Tis excellent, my dear Lord, — cannot possibly be better;—here, Maria, have you seen it?"

"What is it all about?" enquired Mr. Barham, struck by the admiration which this sheet of paper excited, as it passed from hand to hand;—"Is it a book Lord Warrington has been writing, Miss Wilmot?"

"Why, really, 'tis very much the same thing," replied she, laughing; "'tis an address to the county."

"Oh, is that all? — something political only," said he, in a tone of disappointment. "I wonder that people ever trouble themselves about politics, stoopid things!"

About two hours after dinner, the door opened, and Pat Murphy entered, smiling.

"Is he come?" cried Barham.

"He is, sir."

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, he's come; good news, Lord Warringdon, he's come." And away he flew, clapping his hands, followed by Maria.

"What in the world's the matter with him?" cried Mr. Mc Alpine; "who is it that's come?"

"No less a personage than Paddy *Boucha*," said Mr. Wilmot, laughing.

"Ra'ally, I'm astonished at your patience, Lady Anne, with such a silly, uninteresting crature as he is: I am ra'ally exthramely annoyed that I have been the manes of inflicting him on you."

"Pray don't say a word about it, my dear friend," replied Lady Anne, with one of her

most gracious smiles. "Any guest of yours would be welcome here."

"Unfortunately," resumed Mr. Mc Alpine, "I could not take him away without going myself; and how could I do that! how could I," he added, whispering tenderly to Isabel, who was seated between him and the Viscount, "how could I have the courage to tear myself from her I adore,—from the idol of my soul,—the soft star of my destiny? What would my fair charmer have said, in that case, of her truant knight?"

"I was just going to ask you to acccompany me to the revels, below," said Lord Warringdon."

"And why not?" replied Isabel, eagerly; "I am quite ready."

"Oh, no, I must not take you away a second time, from 'love and Byron,' said he, glancing alternately at Mr. Mc Alpine and Lady Anne. "Your mamma and I have had a battle royal, to-day, about the '*beau futur*,' and she has commanded me, on pain of her imperial displeasure, never to say, or even to think, that Byron could have a fitter interpreter, or Love a more eloquent or persuasive

votary; and, moreover, that it must be felony, without benefit of clergy, to let you suppose that I, or any body else, could ever imagine greater perfection. I never saw a woman so much in love with her daughter's lover in all my life; more than you yourself, I think, *la belle Fiancée*."

"You have chosen a disagreeable subject, my Lord," said she, colouring; "I should be obliged by your changing it."

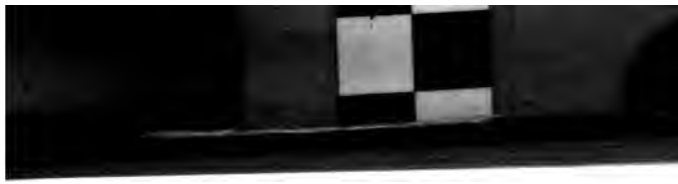
"Your wishes are laws to me, my fair secretary," said he, bowing with mock deference; "never again will I say aught to disturb your equanimity;—am I forgiven? and will you take my arm, and accompany me to where they are 'tripping on the light fantastic toe,' as the Morning Post has it?"

Isabel smiled forgiveness, and they quitted the room together.

CHAPTER III

When [illegible] Washington and Isabel entered the [illegible] hall they were received with the same manifestations of joy which had greeted Mrs. and Mr. Barham. The humming and [illegible] of bees was, indeed, excessively [illegible] but it was also excessively deafening. Assisted by every member of the Clark Wilson household, reinforced by tradesmen [illegible] the mail, who had lounged in the back [illegible], and the idlers of the neighborhood, who had been attracted by the paper [illegible], each and all, their utmost

strength of palms and lungs, to do honour to "the quallity." The acclamations for the lastcome couple even surpassed, perhaps, those which had welcomed the first—for in addition to the company already alluded to, great numbers of the Mc Alpine tenants (who had strayed over to Castle Wilmot to see their master, in consequence of some one of the multitudinous occurrences which an Irish tenant is perpetually in the habit of referring to his landlord,) were present; and they, looking upon Miss Isabel Wilmot, as their master's property, received her with all the respect and warmth due to their future mistress; crying out, "High for Miss Isabel Wilmot! high for Masther Mc Alpine!" A couple already occupied "the flure,"—viz., Peggy the pretty laundry-maid, and Jim Naughton, of *sans*-pole-driving memory, who had "stepped in with his horses," on his way homewards to Masther Costelloe, from some break-neck excursion. Peggy acknowledged the entrance of "the quallity," by a curtsey, as she sidled along in her dance, and kept her eyes modestly bent on the ground, never by any chance raising them to the face of her partne. Jim,



just wondering what had become of you!— What capital fun this is, Mr. Molly?"

"What fun, Mr. Barham? myself don't see any fun, where is it?"

"Why there;" rejoined Mr. Barham, pointing to the dancers—"don't you see the droll postilion dancing?"

"A what, droll postilion? let's thry and see:" cried father John, looking over Barham's shoulder. "Pooh—'tis nobody but Jim Naughton dancing the way he always does. I never seen one like him," said he, turning to Maria, "for seeing fun, where nobody else but himself can see it. *I* don't see any thing so mighty comical in a little girl and boy dancing; one would think 'twas dancing on their heads they were, or doing some quare trick or other: he does be laughing so; them English has no sinse at all, Miss Maria, honey."

"Perhaps, we should laugh as heartily as he does, if we saw all this for the first time, father John:" observed Maria.

"May be so, *agra*, you know better than me."

The first dance ended
good raw whiskey, were
The priest took a glas
his head—"Here's to t
ladies, and good husban
—hip, hip, hurrah!"
This toast was rece
laughter, interpersed w
amin—long life to 'e
truth, good husbands t
the sooner the better!'
"An' now the gintle
a voice in the crowd.
"Let each of the ye
health of the gintleman
amendment was welcome
cess to ye Jim—my bles
"Very well—" said
humouredly, "here's to
Barham, Esq., of Cral
and may he always co
and of Ireland as he is
ment—hip, hip, hurrah!
"Glory to ye! com
sure enough!" exclaim
applauding crowd.

"Now, Miss Isabel!" but Miss Isabel hesitated—"'tis your turn now, *agra*;" said Mrs. Mc Donogh—"why don't you take your patthern afther your sisther, my honey—do, *asthore ma cree*, or else," continued she, lowering her voice, "the tinants will be thinking 'tis proud ye are—there's my darling:" cried she triumphantly, as Isabel prepared to oblige her—"I knew well the delight of my heart, wouldn't refuse her father's ould nurse."

"Whisht! whisht! hould your bother—don't you see she is going to spake—don't be making sich a noise:" roared one to the other, as they began to applaud before she had begun to speak.

Silence was at length obtained, and all eyes were fixed on Isabel as she gave her toast—

"Here's to the health of Lord Warringdon, and may he, as our representative, ever prove the friend of the county, and of Ireland in general, and," she added, falteringly, "live long and happily!"

"And a pretty Irish wife to him:" added Jim Naughton—"Troth, he might go farther and fare worse;" glancing at Isabel; and the cries of "Success to ye, Jim!—high for Miss

[illegible] kept up her [illegible] jaunty, quiet little [illegible] and a good husband to her [illegible] while remembered the poor girl.

[illegible] Washington perceived her embarrassment, and bowing and smiling his thanks [illegible] the honour she had done him, took the [illegible] from her trembling hand.

"To the health of Mr Wilmot and his family," said he—"my best wish for Ireland is that all her landlords may be like him, and all her tenants like its proprietors."

"[illegible] it is—long it is, my lord—long [illegible] shouted the people, as they thundered forth their sympathy in his wishes for [illegible] which they deemed the first [illegible] in Ireland.

"I have a darlin' young couple, himself and [illegible] wife, intirely," observed Peggy [illegible] to the gentleman, Pat Murphy.

"They would so," agreed Pat, who happened [illegible] in particularly complaisant humour that evening — "they would so. [illegible] as young a couple as yourself and [illegible] Peggy."

"The devil's impudence you have, sure

enough," cried Peggy, "to be comparing the likes of uz to the likes of them! But, now Pat," she added, in a coaxing tone, "don't you see yoursel', I was right?"

"When, asthore? when you tould me I was the darlin' of your heart, is it? you war indeed, Peggy."

"Faith, I never tould you that," replied the bashful Peggy, "I'd be very sorry to be telling an unthruth:" spite of herself, however, smiling slily.

"Well, may be," rejoined Pat, "you mightn't spake intirely so plain as that; any how, you tould it me, the way I'd understand, 'tis that was your maning."

"Don't bother us," interrupted his gentle mistress, "tisn't that I mane at all, you know very well. No—but wasn't I right when I said, who know'd but may be, the English lord and one of the young ladies would be a match—wasn't I right, Pat?"

"To be sure you war—arnt you always right, *ma colleen dhas?*" replied he, gallantly, at the same time causing her to exclaim—

"Behave now, Pat Murphy! bad cess to your impidence! your aqual for impidence

[illegible] never seen, and the quality [illegible]—[illegible] ye."

"[illegible] is [illegible] this coast, [illegible] Peggy—I suppose the quality [illegible]—I [illegible] they're gone, [illegible]."

"[illegible] it is to keep your [illegible] the good [illegible] Pat Murphy [illegible], whether the quality [illegible]—it [illegible]."

"[illegible] enough, if [illegible]," rejoined Pat, laughing [illegible]

"[illegible] Pat Murphy! how [illegible]! I'm the greatest mind in the [illegible] ye!"—Pat advanced his face with a [illegible] expression that enraged his [illegible]—all she raised a some[illegible] hand, and let it fall heavily on his cheek—"[illegible] ye [illegible]

Pat laughed and rubbed his cheek—"ye [illegible] Peggy, my pet—you've [illegible] my jaw, my honey."

Mr Fairlie, who had been listening to

---

* A merry cry in the morning to ye!

the colloquy, and who had succeeded in stifling his laughter, by nearly stifling himself in his pocket-handkerchief, could no longer restrain his delight, but clapping his hands in ecstacy at such a specimen of Irish flirtation, crying out, "You served him right—how good! oh what capital fun!"

The piper struck up a merry tune, and Winny the housemaid came up and dropped a curtsey—"Mr. Barham, if you plaze, sir," said she smiling and blushing.

"What is it? do you wish to sit down?" asked he civilly making room for her.

"It's axing you to dance, she is, sir;" said Peggy.

"Is she really? I am very much obliged to you, Winny, but I'm sadly afraid I don't know how to dance a jig yet; I should put you out I'm sure."

"Oh, not at all, sir;" replied the girls, chiming in together—"'tis mighty asy, you have nothing in the world to do sir, only just to humour the tune, and whatever side of the room your partner does be, to keep opposite to her."

"And whin its over, sir," interrupted Pat,

"just to put your arm round her purty little waist, and say thank ye my Pet, and shoot the action to the word, sir."

"What a funny fellow you are!" cried Mr. Barham."

"Hould your bother, Pat Murphy!" said Winny, reddening with offended modesty.

The crowd cheered the young Englishman as he stood up to dance.

"Ax your partner what tune she'll have, sir:" whispered Jim Naughton.

Barham adopted the suggestion.

"Oh, 'tis all the same to me, sir, whatever yoursel' would like, would be pleasing to me."

"No, let you choose, Winny, you know best what tune will suit us."

"Ax her, sir, would she have 'tattered Jack Walsh.'"

"Oh, what a funny name:" cried Barham.

"Choke ye! Jim Naughton!" cried Winny frowning.

"Perhaps you do not like to dance that tune!" observed Barham, good naturedly—"you can choose any other you like better."

"Oh, there's nothing she li es so well as that, sir:" interrupted Jim, laughing—"she doats down upon it."

"You have some joke about it, I am sure Jim, do tell me what it is, there's a good fellow!" cried Barham, eagerly.

"Oh, nothing at all, sir, only a boy, a friend of mine, one Jack Walsh, that does be dhriving along with mysel', for misther Costelloe; and himsel' and Winny does be mighty great together, he's her bachelor, you know, sir."

"Faith, an' he isn't:" interrupted Winny, scowling at her lover's *fides achates*, Jim Naughton.

"An' he's a great fighter and roisterer at fairs, an' pattherns, sir," continued Jim, "an' one turn, he got the worst of it, at the fair of Derrymanagoslogh, hard by the castle here; an' he come in here the same night to Winny with his clothes tore to tatthers, the most miserable looking cratur ever you seen, sir, an' ever sence we called him tatthered Jack Walsh, after the jig—an' Winny does be mad, on account of the joke about her bachelor. Whenever you want to make Winny come up stairs

he jumped and shouldered very much in the style of Jim Naughton, to the imexpressible delight and admiration of the bye-standers.

"What an iligant match himsel' an' Miss Maria would be!" observed Peggy, "they have such gaining ways with them, jist cut off the same patthern the pair of 'em are—an' so found as he is of her—evermore running afther her, you'd think he'd lose his life when she's out of his sight a minute—axing about her, and looking every place for her—an' thin such screcching-laughing as they do be having together, whin he finds her onst more."

"Pooh! he is no match for her, he has no sense:" remarked Bartly the groom.

"'Tis you that's the judge sure enough, whether he has or no;" retorted Peggy.

"What matthers about his sinse?" observed the cook, "she has enough, I'll be bound, for hersel' an' himsel'."

"T'will be a match, you'll see:" insisted Peggy.

"It won't;" cried the groom.

"It will;" reiterated Peggy—"an', moreover, Miss Isabel an' the English lord will

be another match as sure as my name is Peggy Flanagan."

"An' then your name isn't Peggy Flanagan at all," interrupted Mr. Mc Alpine's groom, "that will never be a match, I can tell you—"

"Why not?" demanded Peggy—

"Because," answered he, "my Masther Mr. Mc Alpine will never let her lave this country—he intends keeping her for himself"—he doats over her, an' well he may, for she's a most beautiful, elegant, finely edicated young lady as ever you'd wish to see—jist the moral of herself, for all the world—they're as like one another as two pays—every one in the country does be saying they're made a purpose for one another—you niver seen sich a way as he does be going on about her, up at the castle—there a most iligant mare he has, he has called afther her—an' a boat he has on the lake that goes by her name, too—un' he does be making poethry on her, out of a poethry book he has up at the castle, at home—an' he does be repating the poethry when he does be out riding—an' I'm credibly informed," continued he, lowering his voice, "that he's come here this turn a purpose to make his

purposals for her, out o' hand—see there! how he's jist come in, along with her ladyship —look at himsel' an' Miss Isabel, now—Isn't he coorting her, like mad, this minute—see how well he can't take his eyes off her, but does be whispering to her, something I'll be bound she's mighty plased to hear, see how purty an' modest she keeps lookin' on the ground."

"My blessing to her—she's in the right of it!" muttered Peggy unheard by the last speaker—"not to be looking on an ugly yallow cratur of his kind—poor girl, as I am, Mrs. Mc Donogh, I'd rather beg the world over with one I'd like, than I'd be sitting on a throne of goold with the likes of him, beside the—"

"Mysel' don't so much mis-like him, truth," observed Winny, who had just joined the group of Castle Wilmot followers, then occupied descanting out of hearing of the Mc Alpines on the ill favoured visage of their Lord— "he's always a good warrant to give me five or six tinpinny bits, if he stops but the night—an' I niver seen a gintleman less trouble in his room, than himsel'—he's a mighty clane gintleman, Peggy—mighty clane,

itsel'—the one jug o' wat
lasts him a for'night—
splashing and washing,
thering as other gintleme
always running every m
to the flure, Peggy—"

"I'm not saying whe
tleman or no," rejoined Pe
to say to him good or ba
saying is, that the Eng
far beyant him, in rega
Miss Isabel—"

"Avoch—to be sure
will be a match you 'll se

"A' to be sure it wil
saying all night?"

"When my masther
ries Miss Isabel Wilmot,
drigan, Mr. Mc Alpine'
and Pat Murphy, "what
be all over the counthry!
ding we'll have; Castle W
castle will carry every t
two finest intherests in t
—they 'll return the t
Faith they would so—o

" as asy as they'd swallow a tumbler o' punch—"

" Aye troth—" said Pat.

Mr. Kelly and Pat Murphy, as men and politicians, were less annoyed by Mr. Mc Alpine's " yallowness," than the females of the household. To return " two mimbers for the county " was in their opinion the culminating point of human grandeur—and Mr. Mc Alpine, having the greatest number of freeholders after their master, was of course the next greatest man in their eyes, and a far more important personage than Viscount Warringdon, consequently a much more desirable alliance for the family. In the glorious days of the " *forty shillingers,*" a gentleman's importance was estimated not so much by the productiveness of his acres, as by their quantity, and the number of ragged human beings he could contrive to *pen* upon them. Lord Warringdon might be the first man in England, for any thing Mr. Kelly or Pat Murphy knew or cared to the contrary—but he was not " the first man in the county," any how, nor the second neither. The Castle Wilmot household divided, however, on this

ried soon, whomsoever it may be to, on account of the dhrame I had."

"What dhrame, Peggy?" enquired Mrs. Mc Donogh.

"A great dhrame I had, ma'am, about cats and dogs fighting."

"Ay, that's a fine dhrame,—you couldn't have a betther one for marriage, Peggy."

"So I always heerd tell, Ma'am, that to dhrame of cats an' dogs fighting was the finest sign in the world of a marriage."

"Tell us your dhrame, an' God bless you, Peggy," said Mrs. Mc. Donogh.

"Dhraming I was, ma'am, that I was sitting below, in the scullery, dhrying my clothes, becase the chimbly smoked so in the laundhry, I was afeard they'd be all black; an' while I was sitting there, wondhering how long they took to dhry, there come in a big black dog, with red eyes."

"Are ye sure his eyes was red, Peggy?' demanded Mrs. Mc Donogh.

"I am, ma'am,—and he kept running about every place, as though he was looking for something. Mysel' got frickened, he looked so big an' terriblo; an' I was staling

out unknownst, when I heard a cat
outside the scullery window, sich oth
ing, Mrs. Mc Donogh, you niver hea
my dhrame, I thought 'twas Kutty M
cat, that run wild, an' used to be kee
the shrubbery, beyant, an' the little b
used to be throwin' stones at her, you
the masther bid 'em take care for thei
would they do the like agin. Well, I
'twas Kutty Murphy's cat, so I oper
window, an' let her in, for fear the r
would be mad if I did'nt; and if I di
sel' and himsel' began fighting. Och
Mc Donogh, they bate all ever you
tearing an' scratching, an' snarling a
ting, like mad. My heart was batei
any thing when I woke, Mrs. Mc Donc

"That's a fine dhrame, Peggy, I'll
it to you."

"Thank'ee, ma'am."

"The big black dog," resumed M
Donogh, "is a gintleman of great
an' clever appearance; you remimb
axing ye, Peggy, were ye sure of the
of his eyes?"

"I do, ma'am," rejoined the dreamer

"Red eyes," continued the expounder, "is a sign he comes from England; an' lookin' about every place is a sign he comes over here for something particklar,—ye know the English lord come lookin' for the county; the cat mewing is Miss Isabel,—ye know she's not so hearty as what Miss Maria does be; then, you know, hersel' an' himsel' fighting is a sign it's married they will be."

"That's jist what I was thinking mysell', ma'am. "Well, afther that, Mrs. Mc Donogh, I fell asleep the second time, and I thought mysel' and my little sisther was below at the river, wringing out the clothes, an' I felt something scrape my arm, an' I looked back, an' what should I see, but a little, small white dog, with a collar about his neck; an' he kept scrapin', scrapin', even till I looked up, an', faith, there was a cat, a mighty ugly one, itsel', above in the three; a small, miserable-looking cratur, as ever you seen! an' while I was lookin' at her, she turned into a cat as big as a horse; and she jumped off the three, all of a suddent, and tuk the little dog, and began randlin' him. Well, ma'am, they fought, and tore each other to bits, an' she finished

by atin' him, intirely, all to his collar, an' she tuk that in her mouth, an' wint an' scraped, scraped, even till she made a hole in the ground, an' put the collar in it,—and then I woke, for Winny gave a kick in the bed."

"That's a fine dhrame, too, Peggy: the small, little white dog is Mr. Barham; an' the collar is a sign he has a fine fortune; an' the scrapin' is a sign he's always talkin'; the cat in the three is Miss Maria; an' lookin' miserable is a sign that she isn't so at all, Peggy; —dhrames, you know, always goes by conthraries:—well, then, her changing to be as big as a horse, is a sign she's to have a fine, large house, and a great dale of children."

"The Lord be praised!" cried Peggy.

"Well, Peggy, her throttling the little dog is a sign she'll have more sinse than him; an' ating him up alive, of coorse, is a sign its man an wife they'll be."

"An' the collar, Mrs. Mc Donogh, what does that mane, ma'am?"

"Oh, the collar, Peggy, is a sign there will be no ind to the grandeur an' prosperity she's to live in;—an', moreover, that she's to

have the upper hand of him;—for she tuk the collar of him, you remimber, Peggy?"

"Musha, that it may be so!" ejaculated Peggy. "God sees and knows, Mrs. Mc. Donogh, there isn't a night nor morning I don't pray for husbands for 'em both. Miss Isabel is'nt so intirely *lauchy* * a cratur as Miss Maria, but she's a mild, quiet little cratur, never gives a sour look, nor cross word; —the Lord purtect 'em both! Miss Maria more especially. What in the world's that they're screeching about there, beyant, Barry Sullivan?"

"Pat Sullivan, Mr. Mc Alpine's foster-brother, that's axing Miss Isabel to dance; and Misther Mc Alpine's tinants are clapping her," replied Barney.

"Mc Alpine and Wilmot for ever!" cried the Mc Alpine followers; "high for Misther Mc Alpine! high for Miss Wilmot!"

"Them tinants of Mr. Mc Alpine are mighty impident, arn't they, ma'am?" questioned Peggy of her oracle, Mrs. Mc Donogh; "You'd think, to hear 'em goin' on, their

* In this sense, *gracieuse*.

masther had nothing in the world to
jist to come coortin', and get for axin

"What matthers what ignorant p
their description think at all?" repli
Mc Donogh, shrugging her shoulders,
cast a look at the yelling, hand-clapp
Alpine's followers.

"What manner of breeding can the
them have, who has no experience o
hould your chat," said she, angrily, to
her side, who was roaring out for 'Mis
and Misther Mc Alpine;' "hould your
—don't you see she don't like it?"

"She does like it," interrupted Pat
of offending the Mc Alpine conseq
"she likes it well, I promise you; on
ashamed, because Mr. Mc Alpine is by.

Mr. Mc Alpine, though he seldom
scended to dance, thought that this o
might prove one of the few exceptions
general rule; and, to reward the fair Is
her graciousness, in dancing with his
brother, and to shew his sense of th
pliment, thereby paid himself, he stood
relieved his follower, an expression
means that he took the man's place

dance, who, according to the usual etiquette, immediately sat down. The shouting and cries of "High for Miss Isabel! high for Misther Mc Alpine!" redoubled, to his delight, and her annoyance, and to the gratification of the men, and infinite displeasure of the women of the Castle-Wilmot establishment. Winny, from her occasional attendance on Lord Warringdon's room, as well as on account of getting a compliment from him, now and then, on her rosy cheeks and blue eyes, when they accidentally met on the stairs, was on talking terms with the Viscount; hence she now addressed him thus:—If I was a fine, cliver gintleman, I wouldn't let a nice young lady have such a yallow face as *that*, for a partner; glancing at Mr. Mc Alpine, "when I'd have a good one of my own to put in its place," laughing, slyly, as she looked up at Lord Warringdon.

"Perhaps, she might be displeased, Winny," replied he, smiling at the compliment and insinuation it conveyed.

"Displeased, is it?" cried Winny; "Musha faith, an' she wouldn't; an' why would she? she has eyes in her head."

[illegible] Warrington took the hint, and, imita[illegible] [illegible] relieved M[illegible] [illegible] waxing very indig[illegible] [illegible], however, did not; [illegible] this kind of vexation was immed[illegible] [illegible] one of another expre[illegible]

[illegible] regarded his lordship's mov[illegible] as a [illegible] permitted by the rules of th[illegible] [illegible] and disconcert the lover[illegible] [illegible] being always well received by th[illegible] [illegible] particularly from a superior, h[illegible] [illegible] in his passing in the amus[illegible] [illegible], notwithstanding his fa[illegible] [illegible], helped him on wonderfully [illegible] [illegible] and he was rewarded by shout[illegible] [illegible] and cries of "Warrington fo[illegible] [illegible] [illegible], huzza for the Englis[illegible]

"[illegible] a fine clever gentleman," observe[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] servants; "I'd be glad th[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] him: he has no pri[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]"

"[illegible] [illegible]" cried Jim Naughto[illegible] [illegible] a real gentleman, every inch of him; [illegible] [illegible] a compliment of a five-pou[illegible]

note, for dhrivin' him up here; and though he thought (the crature) 'twas all my fault he stuck in the bog-hole, an' his bones broke a'most in comin' along, devil a word he said cross, or out of the way, to me; and before he set out, breakin' his heart laughin' at one thing or other, jokin' with mysel', you'd think 'twas his born brother I was, faith, you would. Pat Sullivan, I hope," he continued, turning to Peggy, and whispering, in order that Pat Sullivan might not overhear him, "I hope it's him she'll marry, an' not Misther Mc Alpine, with his big, yallow teeth, an' poor, little, miserable, squeezed-up, starved, carcase; like a weazel he is, for all the world, an' nothing but skin an' bone, no substance in him at all; the English lord would make two of him, Peggy. By my conscience! if I was a young lady, I wouldn't look at him, itsel', let alone marrying him: and he's a great negur, as ever you seen, in his own house, Peggy."

"A-thin, is he, Jim? well to be sure, an' them tinants of his, that does be braggin' so out of him, what a fine house he keeps, an

CHAPTER IV.

Lady Anne and Maria were overwhelmed with business for some days, making preparations for the party—settling whom they must invite, and whom they need not—those they should ask to dinner, and those they could not possibly have room for—those to whom they should offer beds, and those whom they might leave to the care of their guardian angels on their return homewards, &c., &c. The party being given in honour of the candidate, it was of course necessary to invite the principal constituents of the county, unfortunately, many of the principal constitu-

"Very true:" replied lady Anne—"and we must ask the catholic Bishop and O'Reilly, to dinner, to give Warringdon the better opportunity for conciliating them—*they* have no women, thank God."

"Don't forget the Colonel and field officers, and a few Captains or so, of the regiment—we want the band—and military men always set off a party so much:" observed Maria.

"Remember," said lady Anne, "that we write to Kitty Mc Alpine."

"Oh, by all means, she possesses, in perfection, the requisites for admittance; her brother in petticoats; ugly enough in all conscience:" laughed Maria.

"We may ask all the lady Pembertons, I think, Maria."

"Oh yes, all—it would take one a century to decide which was the least hideous."

"What shall we do about the Ryans? the girls are both exceedingly pretty."

"Yes, but they are also exceedingly vulgar:" answered Maria.

"Ah, very well, I forgot that. Now, about Eliza Fitzgerald. I am sadly annoyed. I can't possibly avoid having a bed for *her*.

Mr Fitzgerald, member for the county, ... friend and colleague of your father: and ... as a beautiful, accomplished, elegant-minded young woman."

"Yes, but she isn't fashionable—kn... one of the people whom everybody wh... somebody knows."

"Her figure, my dear Maria, is splendi... there she has decidedly the advantage o... Isabel—in other points the attractions ... balanced: her features are more regular, ... the expression less engaging, than Isabel ... her person—I repeat, impossible not ... struck by her."

"Granted," replied Maria, "but sh... deep blue indigo. Do you imagine that ... beauty, accomplishments, and majesty ... earth would atone in Warringdon's opinio... or, indeed, in that of any man, for the hi... crime and misdemeanour of reading Gree... and what is worse, talking of it? by the wa... you appear to me to give yourself an immo... sity of needless trouble, picking out ug... girls for him—he would no more marry one ... these pretty nobodies than he would fly."

"You don't call Miss Fitzgerald a nobody, my dear Maria."

"I don't call her a nobody *positively*, but relatively she is—nobody in town knows her—so she will be nobody to our Viscount. Besides you ought to know by this time that it isn't quite so easy a matter to make young men fall in love with every pretty girl they see."

"I am not afraid of his falling in love with her—but I am alarmed lest his admiration be diverted from Isabel by seeing beauty of another kind—the great thing is never to suffer a man to see what is capable of dividing his attention. Let Warringdon find Isabel superior to all around her, and he will fancy her superior to all he ever saw before. I see I'm making way with him, and to lose him now, after all the trouble I have been at, would be really dreadful, you are sure I need have no apprehensions about Eliza Fitzgerald?"—

"None upon earth:" replied Maria.

Lady Anne still pondered.

"Well," said Maria, laughing, "not convinced yet?"

"He must be a sad bore to you, my dear Maria."

"Yes, I find this courting of mine *tant soit peu ennuyant*, but it can't he helped."

Invitations were despatched all over the county, and great was the commotion excited, and various were the reports circulated as to the precise motive whereon was founded the giving of this said ball. Some said it was an electioneering party — others said it was a marriage party—and a third group insisted that it was to unite both: that is, as a compliment to Lord Warringdon the canditate, and Mr. Mc Alpine the son-in-law, at one and the same time. Vehicles of all descriptions were put in requisition, from the carriage-and-four down to the jaunting car; nay, some did not disdain even a common peasants "car," for once in a way, to convey their daughters to a ball at "the Castle," and to a young rich wife-less English lord; for the fact of his celibacy had spread like wild fire through the country.

"You must all put into the lottery, young ladies. Lord Warringdon is not married yet:" said Lady Anne, either *vivâ voce*, or by means

of a pretty little billet, to all her prime favourites: to wit, all the cross-eyed, red-haired, *brogueaneering* young ladies of her acquaintance—so not a girl among them but rose the morning of the eventful day a viscountess in anticipation.

And upon the said morning, Lady Anne sent all her gentlemen out to ride, immediately after breakfast, in order, as she informed them, to turn the house out of windows comfortably during their absence. The viscount outstaid the rest of the party, and only returned in time to take luncheon and dress for dinner;—as soon as the last operation had been effected, he descended to the drawing-room, where he found a large party assembled—chiefly gentlemen; and among the number were two whose appearance struck him as being more courtly than any he had yet seen in the county of———. The elder, a dignified, intelligent-looking man, was standing at the window, talking to Mr. Wilmot, who listened to him with much deference. The younger was sitting near Isabel, speaking earnestly with her, while she appeared quite engrossed by his conversation; occasionally

lowering her eyes and blushing, as he made some observations in a seemingly playful tone: and Lord Warringdon remarked that the blush was accompanied by a smile, and that the eyes were withdrawn only for a second, or two, and then raised up again to those of her companion. And his lordship also observed that the eyes last alluded to were superb dark ones; and that their owner had brilliant teeth, and a very fine expression of countenance into the bargain.

"Devilish good looking fellow," he muttered; "perhaps this is the man she likes, and not me. If he be a lover (and what other liaison can there be between such a handsome man and such a pretty girl), he is certainly an accepted one; his manner is so gay and secure,—hers so easy and confidential;—that of both so good-humoured and friendly, nay, affectionate:" and, as he cogitated thus, he bit his lips, and knit his brows, settling in his own mind that the elder gentleman was father to the younger.

Lord Warringdon had studied, unobserved by them, the two groups we have noticed; in fact, his entrance into the room was not ob-

served, until Lady Anne's keen eye discovered him, and drew her husband's attention to his noble guest.

"My love, you forget that this is the first time that Lord Warringdon and the Bishop have met."

"I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear lord," said Wilmot, turning round, "I was so absorbed in politics here, that I did not perceive you; allow me to introduce my particular and valued friend, the Catholic Bishop of —— to your lordship."

"*He* can't be the father, then," thought the viscount, as he bowed his most gracious bow, and smiled his most insinuating, vote-asking smile.

"O'Reilly, where are you?" cried Mr. Wilmot.

The handsome stranger advanced.

"My Lord, permit me to present to you another friend of mine,—Mr. O'Reilly."

Lord Warringdon smiled and bowed, less graciously, however, than on the former occasion; and he observed that the stranger looked over at Isabel, and smiled also, and that she returned his smile, slightly colouring.

"If you have any friends at Rome, my lord," said Mr. Wilmot, "Mr. O'Reilly can, perhaps, give you intelligence of them; he is just returned from the imperial city, laden with music, poetry, painting, cameos, and enthusiasm."

"And good-nature, I beg you will add," interrupted O'Reilly, "for permitting you to laugh at me thus, without quarrelling with you."

Lord Warringdon had not much leisure for indulging in speculations concerning Mr. O'Reilly, as he was obliged to play the amiable to the "good interests" scattered in groups round the room. He had to laugh and chat with those he already knew;—bow and smile to, and compliment those whom he saw for the first time, such as Lord and Lady Templemore, and the five Lady Pembertons, Mr. and Miss Fitzgerald, and the Colonel of the regiment; "that he might not be extreme to mark what was done amiss" in the rioting way, when, with heads full of whiskey, and hands of shilelahs, the freeholders of the county should rush to the onslaught, to decide whe-

ther Lord Warrington or Mr. Archer were t
most fitting man to represent them.

At length dinner was announced. Lo
Templemore handed down Lady Anne: M
Wilmot gave his arm to Lady Templemor
and Lord Warrington, just as he was lookin
after Isabel, was requested by Lad
Anne to take care of Lady Mary Pemberton
Mr. Mc Alpine offered his arm to Isabel, bu
Lord W. remarked that she affected not t
see it, and, unasked, placed her arm within
O'Reilly's. At table the Viscount was flanke
on the one side by the Bishop, on the other b
Lady Mary; just opposite to him was Isabel
between Mr. Mc Alpine and Mr. O'Reilly
she was in her best looks, all grace and ani
mation, laughing and chatting with O'Reilly

"The confounded little flirt," muttered
his lordship, between his teeth, as he turne
round to see if he could not employ his tim
as agreeably with his companion as she wa
doing with hers. Of this lady he had ha
but an imperfect glimpse in the drawing-
room, so he was but ill prepared for what he
now saw in the full blaze of light, viz., a pale
cross-eyed, white-haired girl, with a nec

rivaling in length that of the far-famed giraffe of the *jardin-des-Plantes*.

"Devilishly impertinent of Lady Anne to place me near such a scarecrow as this." He surveyed the table;—there was not a face, within view, worth looking at, except Isabel's; the female party, being, in fact, almost made up of married women, only three girls among them: namely, the flirting Isabel, right opposite to him, as has been mentioned; Lady Mary Pemberton, close at his side, too ugly for him even to take wine with; and Miss Fitzgerald, who, sitting at a distance, at his side of the table, he could not see at all.

His lordship felt and looked much disconcerted; and his ill-humour was not a little increased by having, more than once, detected a scrutinizing glance of O'Reilly's provokingly fine eyes directed at himself; after each of which critical regards, Mr. O'Reilly would turn and say something in a low voice to Isabel and Isabel would blush, and he would laugh gaily: and, added to all this, his lordship's audacious, yet sportive, analyzer, would again smile across the table, into his lord-

...ly ... eyes, and, in a kind of triumph ... insupportable to his vanity.

"Curse him and her, too!" muttered ... "the artful little devil: I alw... heard that Irish women were the most c... wonderful flirts upon earth, and, judging Miss Isabel Wilmot, I am certain it is ... saying: the idea of making me a *pis all* —a somebody to flirt with, just to keep h... hand in, when nobody she liked better w... here; and to be so near caught by her app... really guileless, unsophisticated characte... and devoted affection! It was God's merc... I did not, in a moment of weakness, mak... some foolish speech I could afterwards hav... cut my tongue out for having made; she i... telling him a pack of lies, this moment, I da... say, about my admiration of her; and making ... ridiculous sport with him, for having conti... ued constant: but I'll spoil her game, tha... she may depend on: I'll not ask her to dance ... even. I am determined: confound her, again ... I never saw such a piece of deceit in all my ... life."

The Catholic Bishop had to repeat an observation twice to this candidate for one of

the most catholic counties in Ireland, so completely was the politician absorbed in the man.

He, the dangerous Warringdon! for whose attentions the loveliest and most fashionable were contending, to be placed by a gawky fright, nobody knew, and the beauty of the company sitting opposite, her whole heart, tongue, and eyes engrossed by another! It was an insult not to be borne!

"Have you secured Mr. Mc Alpine's interest, my Lord?" enquired the Bishop, for the third time.

"Oh, yes; he and Lady Anne intend this; he shall marry her,—but"

"I beg your pardon, my Lord," interrupted the Bishop, smiling, "that is not an answer to my question: I was not asking whether Mr. Mc Alpine intended bestowing himself on Miss Wilmot, but whether he intended bestowing his votes on your lordship."

"A thousand pardons, my lord, I misunderstood," returned the Viscount, colouring with indignation against himself, for the unconscious and unintentional proof he had just given of the engrossment of his thoughts.

"No:—I have repeatedly sounded Mr. Mc
pine, but have never yet been able to elicit a
thing specific in the way of a promise. La
Anne tells me, however, that he expres
himself to her favourably towards me; a
that he approves my line of politics; and
throws to me, himself, hints about two br
thers, three brothers-in-law, and half-a-doz
cousins in want of places, sinecures, if pos
ble! and I promise to storm the treasury f
them; but still, some way or other, I ca
bring him to the point."

"No; I dare say not," returned the l
shop; "Mr. Mc Alpine is a sad, slippery ge
tleman, in canvassing the county, I am sor
to tell you: his vanity, as well as his intere
will prevent his declaring himself till the ve
day of the election; for, besides making be
ter terms for his votes, he will show th
whatever side he throws his interest into wi
kick the beam, and he will have the credit,
well as profit, of being the casting voice. M
Wilmot could tell your lordship curious st
ries about him;—he has always had mo
trouble with the Mc Alpine interest than th
whole county put together."

"What do you say, my Lord, with regard to a contest?" asked Lord Warringdon. "I was led, at first, to suppose there would be none; but, within the last week, I hear that Mr. Archer is determined to stand; for that he has married an English wife, and no longer wants the sinews of war."

"That is all true," observed the Bishop; but money cannot, in this county, supply the want of interest: we take an equivalent for our votes, indeed, but we don't exactly sell them for hard cash. Now, Mr. Archer stands almost exclusively, as you are, of course, aware, on the Orange interest; an interest you also know, which, in this county, is in the ratio of one to a hundred. I understand he has been coaxing Mr. Mc Alpine, but has not, as yet, obtained a promise of marriage, no more than your lordship; and, unless backed by him, he cannot come to the poll; he has not even ground to stand upon."

Here the Bishop's voice was drowned by a peal of laughter from one of the side tables, at which Maria presided, and around which she had collected a band of choice spirits, composed of young men who had good inter-

ests, young ladies anxious to stand well w
young men of good interests, and a few c
cers reported to be sons of men of fortune.

Cries of "Capital! Bravo! Miss Wilm
upon my soul I never heard a better thin
Miss Wilmot, I give you credit for that! y
are a larking girl! you are a knowing one
were vociferated amidst shouts of laught
to which, however, Mr. Barham did not le
a note; and a gentle tittering, accompan
by exclamations of, "How droll! how pl
sant Miss Wilmot is!" proved satisfactor
to the company that Miss Wilmot's w
though so noisily applauded by the gent
men, nevertheless, was not of a descripti
to shock the ladies of the party.

We would fain hope that our gentle reac
takes sufficient interest in our fun-hunti
friend, Mr. Barham, to regret his absence fr
the laughing band, and to have felt both
gret and surprise at a fact so inconsiste
with the above-mentioned gentleman's usu
line of conduct. Nor do we hesitate to dou
that our said gentle reader is busy in co
jectures as to the why and wherefore of th
extraordinary circumstance. "Has the po

young man met an untimely end? tumbled over a precipice, or tumbled into a bog-hole? has he fallen a victim to the typhus, (cholera was not then in vogue,) or to a fit of laughter? In a word, what has become of him? something must have occurred. He never surely would voluntarily have quitted the festivities of Castle Wilmot; and if at Castle Wilmot, he would as surely have made one at the merry side-table party." In this manner do we imagine our reader to cogitate—and we feel considerable pleasure in being able to relieve his mind of all anxiety concerning our good-natured friend. He has been neither "clifted nor bogged," neither dead of typhus fever, nor of laughing. He is at Castle Wilmot, although not one of the side-table party—and the only reason he is not there is that he is somewhere else—to wit, at the principal table, seated, by Lady Anne's arrangement, near Miss Fitzgerald. "Nothing like contrast," thought her ladyship — and her ladyship thought right, "he will relish Maria's funny stories more than ever after Miss Fitzgerald's aphorisms." With peals of laughter, ringing in his ears, this votary of fun was, there-

"Of course you would not require the same explanations that I should, but still there are so many difficulties arising from allusions to national customs, and expressions and political events, the influence of which, being confined within narrow limits, although at a former time of local importance, have not fallen under the notice of the Historian;—and these points would be obscure to the most perfect clasical scholar.—How much we are indebted to the scholiasts! but for those learned men, how little of the ancient literature would have descended to posterity!—Oh! long ago, the greater part of it must have been consigned to oblivion!"

"You are quite right, Miss Fitzgerald,—I wish to heaven it had," cried Barham who had heard only the last sentence of the foregoing speech;—his attention during the first part of the harangue having been engaged in conjecturing what funny story Miss Wilmot could be telling.

"You are quite right; I should be devilish glad, I assure you, that every Greek and Latin book in the world had been lost long ago,—stoopid pack of trash!"—

Miss Fitzgerald opened her fine eyes
amazement.

"Oh, Miss Fitzgerald, you are Irish. W
you do me a great favour?"

"If it is in my power," politely answer
the young lady; though not now hoping,
some minutes before she had done, that t
favour asked would be a request to be pe
mitted to look at her Italian translation
Xenophon's defence of Socrates; a morcea
of which every body acquainted with the Fit
gerald family had heard;—and as the Fit
gerald family included half the county, Mis
Fitzgerald thought that it included half th
world.

Mr. Barham might, however, entreat her t
favour him with a little music by and by;—
he had heard doubtless of her proficency as
pianiste.

"What is this favour, Mr. Barham?" said
she.

"Oh! that you would tell me some droll
story to make me laugh, like Miss Wilmot,—
will you? I should be so much obliged to
you!—They shant have all the laughing to
themselves at the other table, shall they?—

Miss Fitzgerald was absolutely petrified, she, the best pianoforte player; the best French and Italian, and the only Greek, scholar in the county; to be asked to tell funny stories, to make people laugh!—

"I never tell funny stories, Mr. Barham," she replied, giving him a look that would have done honour to Minerva herself, so fraught was it with wisdom and indignation.

"Oh, dont you?" he ran on?—"What a pity!—I took into my head, some how, you were quite an Irish girl;—never having been out of Ireland, as lady Anne told me;—so I made sure I should find you as funny again as Miss Wilmot."

"Now, we are told comparisons are always odious, but of all comparisons those between ladies are the most odious,—and if there be such a thing as the superlative of a superlative, the comparison just made was, to the person addressed, the most odious of the most odious. The greatest insult, in fact, that could be offered to Eliza Fitzgerald was to compare her with Maria Wilmot, whom she envied for her popularity, though she despised the means by which she had attained it; dis-

most to the drawing-room door; but, just as he was about to enter it, sounds of a different nature met his ear, that is to say, the soft, clear notes of a female voice, supported and strengthened by the mellow tones of a deep, rich tenor, modulated into the most exquisite harmony.

"Who can these be?" thought he. He went in, and saw that the singers were Isabel Wilmot and her admirer, Mr. O'Reilly.

Now, strange as it may appear, it was the first time he had ever heard Isabel sing. Her mother, aware how much the impression, in those cases, depends upon surprise and effect, had always discovered that her daughter had a cold, or was out of voice, whenever his lordship proposed music: and, by these means, she accomplished two desirable objects; first, the augmentation of his curiosity; second, a proof of her total indifference about shewing off her daughter to him.

Lord Warringdon had a good deal of factitious feeling, of that morbid excitability of temperament which would bring tears to his eyes at a finely-executed air by Pasta, though he might hear, unmoved, of the death of a

friend, on the present occasion, so plea
and touched was he by the singers that
momentarily forgot the sins of the indi
duals.

"Bravo, bravo! Signora! Bravo, Signo
he cried.

"Ha!" exclaimed Isabel, with pleas
surprise; "'tis you, my Lord! you have l
the dining-room early."

"And should have come away much earli
had I the least idea I should have heard su
music. Why did you not give me a hint, M
O'Reilly, and bring me with you? I have fr
quently petitioned Miss Isabel Wilmot
sing, but never could prevail on her, howeve
to do so; but if I had once got in, she cou
not well turn me out; and then I might ha
had the benefit of her desire to oblige you
said he, in a cold, offended tone.

"Is this a true bill, Signora Isabella
demanded Mr. O'Reilly. "Has Lord Wa
ringdon asked you to sing, and have yo
been churl enough to refuse?"

Here Lady Anne touched Lord Warring
don's arm:—"Just look at Mc Alpine!"

"What for?" asked his lordship, rathe
ill-humouredly.

"See how proud he looks, poor fellow, of Isabel's performance! She always sings so well with O'Reilly."

"I dare say she does," assented the viscount, significantly.

"Isabel, my love," said her mother, "look out another duett, quick, before the crowd pours in. O'Reilly, you know, don't like singing in general company:" then, lowering her voice, "sing the air Mc Alpine likes so much;—he is quite delighted with you this evening, I can tell you."

Lord Warringdon overhead this, and observed O'Reilly smile, as he whispered Isabel, who appeared to hesitate.

"I was just going to sing something Lord Warringdon asked me for," she said, timidly.

"Do as I desire you, my dear," rejoined her mother, in an affectionately peremptory tone.

Mr. Mc Alpine now placed himself in his usual position, when listening to the lady of his love; that is, stretched across the instrument, staring her full in the face, and beating time out of time.

"How that poor girl is persecuted!" ob-

served O'Reilly, in a commisserating
Lord Warringdon, glancing at Mc Alp

"How do you know the lady cons
persecution?" asked the viscount,
"unless Miss Wilmot be an exception
sex, she will not consider admirati
persecution."

"Recollect that admiration, in thi
is coupled with the pretensions of a
said O'Reilly.

"I don't see how that should ma
admiration less acceptable;—I alwa
derstood the grand object of young
was to convert their suitors into husba

"Yes," replied O'Reilly, "when the
happen to like somebody else."

"And pray, who may the happy n
who is favoured by Miss Isabel Wilm
tachment?" said the Viscount, sarcasti

O'Reilly smiled. "Oh, that's a sec
Lord, I can never reveal till the lady
me permission."

Lord Warringdon repaid him with
his searching looks.

O'Reilly hummed a few bars of
Venetian Barcarolle.

"What a cursed puppy!" thought the noble viscount; "and the mother such a blind buzzard as not to perceive what is going on between him and her coquette of a daughter."

"Isabel, my love," cried Lady Anne, "let O'Reilly hear your harp once more; it used to be his favourite instrument."

Though the harp was close to the sofa upon which my lord was lounging, biting his lips, he never rose to carry it towards its beautiful owner, and the lady and her harp might both have tumbled down, for any thing he cared, in his present mood. "A more impertinent woman than that Lady Anne I never met; if I was a married man, or a half-pay officer, she could not have treated me with more perfect indifference,—more downright disrespect, than she has done ever since I came into her house; she has not even let her daughter play, or sing, for me! upon my word, not a mother duchess in England would presume to treat me thus!"

While he was thus wrathfully ruminating, his attention, spite of himself, was arrested

by Isabel's playing. Her execution was remarkable for rapidity, but her touch beautiful, so full and round, yet soft, cl and bell-like. Then her style was char with sentiment and delivery, and her expr sion exquisite, rendered more touching e than usual, by her anxiety to *interest one* that room whom she perceived, for some ca or other she could not divine, was displea with her.

The appeal was not made in vain. we have before said, Lord Warringdon had good deal of musical feeling. He listen for some time in admiration of the perfor ance, without, however, deigning to look the performer. At length, he suffered eyes to rest on the fair musician.

Now, Isabel Wilmot had a very pre little foot, and a singularly beautiful hand a arm; and the fall of her shoulders was ways considered peculiarly graceful; for these good reasons her mother had selec the harp, as her instrument; and, for the sa good reasons, Lord Warringdon thought, he now gazed on her, that Lady Anne h evinced much judgment in her selection.

man might love such a creature as that," said he to himself, "if she were not such a confounded little flirt!"

Carriages were heard rolling round to the entrance, and a general movement took place, which disturbed the current of his lordship's thoughts, or probably, he might have ended, by perfectly reconciling himself to the fair Isabel, and have been induced, even contrary to his determination, to open the ball with her.

As soon as the music struck up, Mr. Barham and all the young officers, and as many of the country gentlemen as had heads in dancing condition, made their appearance in the drawing-room.

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, such fun as I have had!" said Mr. Barham, holding his sides, 'ready to die;' "such fun! Mr. Molony has just knocked me down."

"Knocked you down! why, how did it happen?"

"Oh, not in earnest, you know; he was just shewing me how he knocked down Mr. Mc Alpine, one day, and he fetched me such a thump on my shoulder, that I fell under

the table! ah, I laughed so, I thought I sho
have died so Irish!"

"You are not hurt then?" obser
Maria.

"No, only a little stiff, but dancing
set me to rights, immediately. Are you
gaged this quadrille, Miss Wilmot?"

Maria informed him that she was.

"How tiresome! well, will you introd
me to a partner, then? a funny one,
know."

"I think," observed Maria, "that
ought to dance with Miss Fitzgerald, as
sat near her at dinner."

Barham recoiled in horror — "Oh,
if you were to give me a thousand pou
Miss Wilmot!"

"Upon my word, I pity you much:" Ma
said, laughing: "Why, Miss Fitzgerald
the beauty, as well as the genius, of the co
ty. She reads Greek, and writes poetry,
must know."

"I don't care whether she does or no:"
replied, rather doggedly — "I got enough
her at dinner, I can tell you. What do
say to her talking all the time about Gr

and Latin; and when I asked her for a funny story, she stared at me as if I had a hundred heads! Disagreeable girl! I would sooner not dance all night, than dance with her. What laughing you had, all of you, at the other table! How I did wish to be among you! you will not forget to tell me what it was all about to-morrow? Oh! Miss Wilmot, make haste and introduce me to some funny girl or other, for the quadrille is already beginning."

"Will you have one of the Miss O'Higgertys?"

"Oh yes! that's such a nice Irish name! I'm sure I should like one of them."

Maria led him up to the eldest Miss O'Higgerty; daughter to the well-known attorney of that name who, together with his family, were invited ostensibly to secure his services at the approaching election, to Lord Warringdon, but those intimately acquainted with the Wilmots were aware that the fact of Mr. O'Higgerty having some heavy untaxed bills of costs against the Castle Wilmot estate had a considerable share in obtaining for himself and his four bouncing, red-cheeked

daughters, admittance among the "tip-t
grandees" of the county.

"I don't like quadrilles and walzes, at al
observed Mr. Barham, to his partner, "b
Miss Wilmot has promised to let us dan
jigs by and bye. That will be much ple
santer, will it not?"

"Jigs!" echoed the young lady, with
look of consternation. "How could Mi
Wilmot think of such a thing? The idaa! f
God's sake, who ever heard of dancing ji
in company?"

"A jig!" cried one—"a jig!" repeat
another—and "jig! jig! jig!" ran rou
the room, in all imaginable varieties of to
and accent, expressive of amazement.

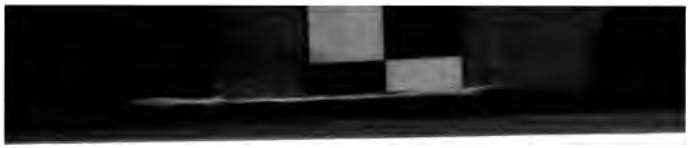
"So you should not like to dance a jig
continued Mr. Barham. "I wonder at that
I should have thought you just the girl to e
joy it! such a regular Irish name! and su
a capital brogue and all!"

The young lady answered with some litt
warmth—"What an idaa you must have
Ireland, Mr. Barham! good Irish society, y
know, is just the same as English—no diffe
ence in life—I hope you don't form so u

favourable an idaa of us as to imagine you would see anything in good society in Ireland different from what you would see in England?"

"Well, I declare, I can't undestand that at all:" replied Mr. Barham. "If I were an Irishmam, I should always be trying to be as Irish as possible. I would dress, and dance, and talk, and walk, and eat, and drink, and live differently from everybody else in the world, so that the moment I came into a room, people would say, I'm sure that gentleman must be Irish. I would just go on the way they do in a play. I would be always swearing, and saying funny things, and fighting duels, and running in debt, and in fact, doing all sorts of out of the way things. My goodness! what's the use of being Irish, if one does just the same as if one was English—so very stoopid that would be!"

"I don't think gentility can ever be stupid;" Miss O'Higgerty replied, with a toss of her head—"at laste according to *my* idaas. God forbid I'd ever see the day that Irish ladies and gentlemen would be different from other ladies and gentlemen—God forbid I'd ever



Lady Anne rose. "Can you tell me, my lord, whom Isabel is dancing with?"

"I really did not happen to observe:" he carelessly replied.

For once in his life, at least, the young gentleman did not tell the truth. He knew perfectly well, not only who Isabel was then dancing with, but had observed who had been her partners throughout the evening. Neither had he failed to remark that she had danced languidly. "Because," thought he, "O'Reilly is not near her."

"How comes it, Mr. O'Reilly, that you are not dancing this evening?" Lord Warringdon said, as they now stood together, looking on at a whist party.

"I never dance, my lord."

"You do not like it?"

"Yes, I liked it, when a boy."

"It is not your years, however, that need prevent you now, I should imagine?" said the Viscount, smiling.

"No, not exactly my years; but it is not usual for men of my profession, at any age to dance."

"A young barrister I suppose:" thought

"You!" Lord Warringdon exclaimed, looking in his turn astonished, and not a little pleased also—"You! a Catholic priest! I never should have thought so."

"No? Is my appearance then so very unclerical, my lord?" Mr. O'Reilly enquired, smilingly.

"Hnmph! I don't exactly know how to answer that question. A man need not certainly be a worse priest for happening at the same time to be a good-looking fellow; and singing as if he were in the land of song; and talking to pretty girls; but someway, if I were a catholic husband, I should rather my wife had any other confessor."

O'Reilly coloured, and answered gravely—"If you *were* a catholic husband, my lord, you would know better, I hope, than you seem to do at present what are, and what are not, the qualifications to be avoided in a confessor—and whether Catholic, or Protestant, I hope you may never marry a woman you might not trust with a person more dangerous than myself, even if I were a mere man of the world. But I should think, my lord, that

[illegible] need not fear any rival," he [illegible] smiled.

The Viscount bowed, and smiled [illegible] after a short pause, resumed the con[illegible]versation.

"Do you know, that I imagined, you [illegible] the accepted lover of the young lady you [illegible] next at dinner to-day."

"Excellent! Oh, come, I shall tel[illegible] that directly," said O'Reilly laughing. "[illegible] certainly I must have played my *rôle* of [illegible] admirer to perfection, since I appeared s[illegible] interested, and sympathizing, as to be take[illegible] the dear himself."

"But who is this lover?" the Visc[illegible] inquired.

Mr. O'Reilly gave him one of those s[illegible] cunning looks which had so much prov[illegible] his friendship during the former part of [illegible] day.

"Is it anybody I know?" Lord Warr[illegible] then continued.

"You may think that you know him, [illegible] Bye, come, come, you must not t[illegible] pet with the secrets of the confessional, [illegible] know—besides, I want to see this fair mist[illegible] of mine."

Lord Warringdon took O'Reilly's arm, and they returned together to the ball room.

Isabel was making the tour of the apartments with her partner, on whom, however, she appeared to bestow less than her usual attention, whilst he, on his part, was all assiduity. Lord Warringdon remarked that Isabel frequently looked uneasily around her, as if in search of somebody, and when, at length their eyes met, that hers were instantly withdrawn, and that turning to the young officer, her late partner, (who was, by the way, eldest son of an English baronet, of very large fortune, in the north of England,) she talked, and laughed, and did all in her power to evince perfect indifference to his approach, and although she saw him elbowing his way to her, followed by O'Reilly, never condescended to look at, or smile upon him.

"Will you dance the next quadrille with me?" the Viscount said, in his softest tone, and with his sweetest smile.

"I regret that I am engaged for the whole evening, my lord:" she replied, with a graceful, haughty movement of her pretty head, which Lord Warringdon thought quite be-

my consent:" said O'Reilly, with mock gravity.

"Your consent!" repeated Isabel, "pray why should I ask your consent? I am not one of your flock, am I?"

"Not one of my flock, indeed! don't you know that I have even higher authority over you than that of priest, or confessor—that is to say, the authority of an affianced husband?"

"What on earth, are you talking about?" Isabel asked, with surprise.

"And how is it possible, Miss Isabel Wilmot, that *you* can have the face to deny that I am your lover, the secret and favoured rival of mamma's knight of the castle? you need not mind *le beau viscount* here—for he knows all about it—in fact, he was the first to discover our attachment—so acknowledge the truth at once, and I dare say he will use his influence in our behalf, and induce mamma to consent to our secret union? come, my gentle, blushing, Isabel, *spake* to our friend." And he imitated the tone, and look of Mr. Mc Alpine so perfectly that, notwithstanding Isabel's embarrassment at some of the allu-

some in Mr. O'Reilly's speech, she join
Lord Warrington's laugh. But though
what surprised, she was also made very
by this same speech, finding in it a c
her lover's sudden change of manner to
her.

Lady Anne joined the group.

"My dear, if you are not engaged
set, I wish you would allow me to intr
you to a young lady."

"My dear lady Anne, what else have
been washing, and doing, all night, tha
fitting young ladies upon me! and, b
way, a more diabolically hideous set of y
ladies I never had the felicity to encou
I really must sit this quadrille, or I shal
and, moreover, have to lay my death at
door. Only think, how it will figure i
Morning Post—'On the 25th of this m
died at Castle Wilmot, in the county of —
Viscount Warrington, eldest son of
Grenville, of a surfeit of ugly partners."

"Oh, come, nonsense," Lady Anne
laughing, and walking him away. "
does it signify about the daughters' loo

you get the fathers' votes? I think it a cheap purchase, for my part.'

"You do? I have not, then, the honour of agreeing with you. But do tell me how it happens that your women are not prettier in this part of Ireland? The men, most of them, are very fine-looking fellows, and have a good, dashing air about them, but the women are plain, and—"

"Come, come, you must not be so ungallant. At any rate, you shall not, this time, have to complain of the want of attraction in your partner, for I am going to introduce you to Miss Fitzgerald, the most beautiful girl in our county."

"Not while your daughter remains in it?"

"Oh, Isabel cannot be termed beautiful;—she is an elegant, interesting girl, but that is all; whereas, Miss Fitzgerald's face and figure are faultless. But, however, many agree with you, in preferring Isabel. Do you know I never could account for the extraordinary admiration she has excited, for I really and unaffectedly have always considered her over-rated. Then, again, Miss Fitzgerald has

much more acquirement than Isabel,—she speaks seven languages,—my daughter only knows French and Italian."

"And abundance, my dear Lady Anne, for any woman to know. French for the ball-room.—Italian for the *boudoir*. I shall bring in a bill into this new parliament to make it felony, without benefit of clergy, for a lady to learn more. These young ladies, of seven-language power, are absolute inflictions."

"She is an admirable classical scholar, too."

"Angels and ministers of grace defend me!" the viscount exclaimed, throwing himself into an attitude. I'll empty all these veins, and shed my dear blood, drop by drop, to please or serve you, but this I cannot, dare not do."

"You ridiculous creature," interrupted Lady Anne, laughing. "Come on,—oh, you must, indeed, or neither she nor her father will ever forgive you."

"Necessity has no law," he said, shrugging his shoulders.

He assumed, however, his most insinuating smile, when he asked the favour of dancing

the next quadrille with Miss Fitzgerald.

Now this young lady was, indeed, not only a profound classical scholar, and admirable pianoforte player, but she was also an enlightened politician, and this branch of her knowledge she now brought forward for the special entertainment and edification of the new canditate, who, however, unfortunately happened to dislike politics as much as Mr. Barham did Greek: all the European governments, in succession, underwent her critical examination, in the intervals of "*avant deux*" and "*chassez croisez.*"

"What a handsome bore that woman is!" said the Viscount to himself, as he resigned the learned Eliza to her new partner.

At length the seven quadrilles, which stood between Isabel and Lord Warringdon's, were got through, and he had just come to claim her, when Lady Anne stepped up to them.

"Oh, my Lord, I want to introduce you to Miss Mc Alpine."

"Impossible, my dear Lady Anne, I am already engaged."

"To whom, may I ask?"

"To Miss Isabel Wilmot."

"Oh, what does that signify?—Isal easily find another partner, and sh equally give you credit, for your good tion in her favour. You don't, I suppos to make a conquest of her,"—she laughing.

Lord Warringdon felt the hand on l slightly tremble, as Lady Anne thus so quietly to take for granted their u difference to one another. Instinctiv pressed the little soft hand, as he repl on his arm.

"Oh really, Lady Anne, you must me, this time."

"And, oh really, Lord Warringdon, do no such thing," she answered playf "Come away, my dear Isabel, we m give this lazy candidate of ours any e and she drew her daughter's arm withi and walked her off.

"Was there ever such a provoking cuting marplot?" the Viscount mutte he made his bow to Miss Mc Alpine.

The band struck up a waltz, he de his hideous one on the first vacant se

looked round for Isabel — whom he discovered at last, Mr. Mc Alpine sitting near her and laughing, as was his custom, on three chairs at once, and rolling his large unmeaning eyes; and just as he was apologizing to her, for not asking her to waltz, being "afraid," as he said, of "throwing her down," (the usual finale of his waltzing enterprises,) and as she was smiling forgiveness, Lord Warringdon walked up to them:

"You waltz, do you not?" he asked.

She nodded.

"Let us be off then, before *la chére maman* makes a re-appearance with a new fright in her hands—one would think all the hideousness of the county had rendezvoused here tonight — come, *la bellina, carina, flirtina;*" he said, playfully putting his arm round her waist.

The whole room was in admiration of the graceful movements of this handsome couple, and none more so than Lady Anne herself, although when they paused a moment to take breath, she asked her daughter in a displeased tone—

"Why are you not dancing with Mr Alpine, my dear?"

"Because, mamma, Mr. Mc Alpine n waltzes, you know."

"*Allons donc*," said the Viscount, repla his arm. But Isabel hesitated, for she that her mother was offended.

"Why what is the matter? are you tire he asked.

"No;" answered Isabel, colouring. " mamma does not wish me to waltz."

"Oh, I beg pardon—I was not awar your mamma's objection to it, or of cou should not have asked you."

Lady Anne continued to bite her lips play with her fan. Isabel sat down and tu her back on Mr. Mc Alpine, and Lord V ringdon turned his on Lady Anne.

"Confound the woman!" he muttere he folded his arms, and stretched out legs.

"I thought you were going to walz, lord?" Lady Anne observed, in her swe and most guileless manner.

"I was, but your ladyship prevented n he answered.

"There are plenty of *valseuses* in the room, besides my daughter; for instance, Miss Mc Clintock, who walzes beautifully — shall I introduce you?"

Now, Miss Mc Clintock had a pair of staring light blue eyes, by no means to the taste of his young lordship, so he met the offer rather coldly.

"I am much obliged to your ladyship, but I have changed my mind, and do not intend waltzing all the evening."

"As you please, my lord;" she replied with offended dignity.

"Mr. Mc Alpine! will you have the kindness to give your arm to Isabel as far as the next room, for I am sadly afraid of her taking cold here."

Poor Isabel was ready to cry from vexation, but how soon would her tears have been converted into smiles, could she have seen the glance of indignation, and offended pride which the Viscount darted at her mother!

During the remainder of the evening, he scarcely condescended even to speak with his hostess, who, in consequence, retired to rest that night, full of the most joyful, and bril-

CHAPTER V.

DID Lord Warringdon awake the morning after the ball, "downright in love," with Isabel Wilmot?

We do not choose to speak too decidedly on the subject, but our belief is that some progress has been made in causing his lordship to thaw; inasmuch as the attentions which he had originally paid Isabel, merely to supplant her lover, and outwit her mother, (the person he liked best to outwit, after a husband,) without any ulterior object, beyond the amusement of the hour, he now offered from interest in herself. For the first time in his life, he was sure of having inspired a genuine

and spontaneous affection, wholly unpro
ed by interested speculations, evidently
couraged as it was by her family; and a
this attachment was so delicately indic
so dignified by reserve and womanly p
that he never could venture to presume
his discovery of its existence.

And how did Isabel awake the mor
after the ball?

Why, very happy and very tired—for
had passed the whole night thinking o
that Warringdon had said, and all he had
said, but which he very likely would h
said, had not her mother either accidenta
or designedly, interfered to prevent him
never allowing them to remain a mon
together.

"Oh yes!" said she to herself, "no
am sure he loves me! for what an instanta
ous change took place in his manner, f
the time he discovered that O'Reilly was
a rival. Dear, dear Warringdon! gener
disinterested Warringdon! how I love y
but I would not for worlds you knew *yet*
deeply! how devotedly!"

Naturally of an affectionate dispositi

and meeting no return of tenderness from her own family, she had a superabundance of love at her disposal, all of which she now bestowed on the handsome, fashionable, agreeable viscount, quite sure there was in the transaction a strictly honest exchange of commodities.

On the evening of that day, the usual family party, with the addition of Mr. O'Reilly, were assembled in the drawing-room. Mr. Wilmot, and his agreeable reverence, were talking politics. Maria and Mr. Barham trash. Lady Anne and Mr. Mc Alpine sentiment. And Lord Warringdon was sitting near Isabel, making love, or at least, something so a kin to it that she quite spoiled a *papier maché* box which she had intended for her mamma.

These conversational duetts, carried on for some time, in an under tone, were at length interrupted by Lady Anne.

"Well, Mr. Mc Alpine, I will 'take the sense of the house,' upon this motion. Wilmot and Mr. O'Reilly, do leave off counting votes for one moment. Lord Warringdon and Mr. Barham, suspend your flirtations with my daughters, if you please, and give me your

several opinions upon a certain knotty point, which threatens to disturb the hitherto-unbroken amity that has subsisted between Mr. Mc Alpine and myself."

All the gentlemen, except Lord Warringdon, obeyed her commands.

"State the case, Lady Anne," Mr. O'Reil said.

"Why, you must know, gentlemen, Mr. Mc Alpine has the audacity to tell me that he prefers Irish, to English, women! According to him, they are prettier, wiser, better, more capable of loving, and more worthy of being loved: more engaging as girls, more estimable as women; more devoted mistresses, and more attached wives; fonder mothers, kinder friends, and — Heaven knows what besides! In one word, the enumeration of the points of superiority, if noted down, would reach from this to Mc Alpine Castle. Now, is not this too bad? Come, Wilmot, what do *you* say? Which are you for, English or Irish?"

"Oh! I enter my vato (veto) against receiving his vote at all," Mr. Mc Alpine interposed; "for he will judge of English women according to his own exparience, and

attribute to them generally the perfections peculiar to Lady Anne Wilmot."

"Thank you, Mr. Mc Alpine," said Mr. Wilmot, laughing, "for saving me the trouble of making a civil speech to my own wife."

"Well, now the speech has been made for you, pray give us your vote," said Lady Anne.

"Why, that happens to be rather a puzzling sort of vote;—my wife is English, and my daughters are Irish,—how can I decide between them? Now I have it:—I would recommend English women to my own sons, (wishing they may be as happy as myself) and Irish women to the sons of other people."

"Bravo, Signor Padre!" Maria exclaimed. "I like that distinction passing well. Now, Mr. O'Reilly, it is your turn."

"Oh, I have nothing to say to any of you, English, or Irish: and, as my vocation is not that of gallantry, I may be allowed, perhaps, to add, I am not at all sorry for it, inasmuch as I think that man the happiest who thinks least about you."

possession of this most difficult case, pray let us, at once, have the benefit of your critical and fastidious taste, knowledge, and experience. Recollect, that you are English, and that you are this day the sole champion of your country, for Mr. Barham proves a recreant knight. Now, therefore, Viscount Warringdon, 'for St. George and England?'"

"Recollect, my Lord," Maria cried, "that, although you belong to England, you are in Ireland; that we are two to one here, at present; and that Isabel and I have long nails; so your vote, or your eyes, my Lord;—'high, for St. Patrick and Ireland!'"

"Was ever man placed in a more difficult predicament? Honour, patriotism, and Lady Anne, on one side; gratitude, long nails, and the Miss Wilmots on the other! Fair ladies, thus do I decide between motives and attractions so equally balanced:—I am for English women generally, but Irish women particularly."

"Oh, you mane you prefer English ladies to flirt with, but you would be more sariously attached to an Irish woman."

"*Oui, si elle te ressemblait, belle, bonne et*

George and England,' again, fair Isabel."

"No, no, my Lord, you gave the lovely daughters of Erin but half your heart,—but I give them the whole of mine; remember *that*, gentle Isabel, and be sure you decide for St. Patrick and Ireland."

"Silence in the court! do not prejudice the minds of the jury," Maria exclaimed.

"I imitate the laudable example of prudence and impartiality set me by Lord Warringdon. So I am for the English generally, but the Irish particularly," said Isabel, smiling.

"*Maligne que dis tu là?*" Lord Warringdon playfully whispered.

Mr. Mc Alpine rewarded the fair speaker with a look of unutterable tenderness; his large white eyes rolling from side to side, like a ship in a heavy gale of wind, and appearing every moment upon the point of fairly tumbling out, "body and bones," as our friend, Mr. Kelly, would say.

Lady Anne thought fit, just then, to challenge the Viscount to a game at chess, hoping that Mc Alpine's vanity, evidently excited by what he seemed to consider a decided expres-

that you have too much taste and romance of sentiment, to be interested by an Irishman of the common run; swaggering fellows, ready to fight every man, and make love to every woman they meet. No, my charming Isabel, my sweet, modest, shrinking lily of the vale! No, an Irishman of that class could never be the object of a timid and delicate affection such as yours!—But could not my gentle Isabel love a refined and accomplished Irishman?—A man of mind, capable of understanding and appreciating the soft tenderness of her character; one on whom she could lane for support and encouragement; one whose ardour would be tempered with sensibility, and exalted by enthusiasm; one who would repay her devoted attachment with all the intensity of passion, all the elegance of taste, and all the romance of sentiment; one who could brathe (breath) but in the atmosphere of her presence; one who could live but on her words, and whose sunshine was her smiles.—Could you not love such an Irishman as that, enchanting crature of love and beauty?" he whispered, grinning a smile of mingled sentiment and archness.

"Really, Mr. Mc Alpine, I——"

A look from her mother cut short Isabel's sentence, and she stopped abruptly, colouring, and embarrassed.

Mr. Mc Alpine smiled with complacency on her timid attempt at a disavowal of her love, and proceeded thus:

"The man on whom you bestow your first and virgin affections must never have loved before he met you—he may have had passing gallantries, but *none* that need excite an unasy sentiment in your gentle bosom; you must be the first woman he ever raally loved; the first he ever sariously contemplated resigning his liberty to, and committing his honour and pace of mind to; he must be able to say with truth—

"My adorable Isabel—I may have admired others, but I never loved but you—from the first moment I beheld your beauteous form, my fate was saled; for you alone have raalized the romantic idaas and anticipations of my impassioned character; you are the bright, soft dhrame of my soul! the crature of my imagination!—the object of my first, and most passionate aspirations!—Yes! you are indeed

worthy of being the inspiration of poetic fancy; the chosen of a man of mind. Yet, rich as you are in youth, beauty, accomplishments, elegance, refinement, taste, and mind; of gentle birth, and polished manners, surrounded, in a word by fascinations of every description, I should, however, have escaped the thrawldom of your varied and potent charms, if I had not had rason to believe myself the object of an attachment as enthusiastic on your part as upon mine.

"And what man has the right to spake thus, my own fair Isabel? Is it not Mc Alpine? your adoring, and let me hope, not *un*-adored Mc Alpine?—Oh, for the bliss of hearing from your own soft lips this rapturous confirmation of my hopes!—Ah, do let my longing ears drink in the blushing and modest reluctant avowal of your pure and gentle tenderness!—spake, my soft charmer, though it be but a word, one little yes,—to the man who adores you—or a glance will suffice, for I have long been acquainted with the soft language of your bright eyes."

Each time, that unfortunate Isabel had parted her pretty cherry lips, to convey a de-

[redacted]

times!" Lady Anne continued—"Maria! rub poor little Fido's paw, will you?—I am afraid he is sadly hurt,—'Tis your move, my Lord."

He moved; and moved wrong.

"Check to your King!"—she cried.

He made another move, also a false one.

"Check mate!"—and Lady Anne laughed triumphantly.

"I am so delighted to have beaten you at last!—either I have played better, or you worse, than usual."

Why had the Viscount become so suddenly absent and taciturn? Was he out of sorts, at having been beaten at chess, or was he thinking of Mr. Archer, and the election?

"Maria, I wish that you and O'Reily would sing something," said Lady Anne.

Her daughter joyfully assented, glad to be relieved for a while from the trouble of feeding Mr. Barham with good stories.

"What a pleasant girl she is!" the Leicestershire minor observed to the young Candidate.

"Very!" he answered, musing.

"Pity she is so ugly though, is it not?"

"Ugly!" repeated the Viscount, with a

stare of astonishment—"Why she happ
as to one of the prettiest women I have e
seen."

"Good Lord! do you think so?"

"Why who the deuce thinks otherwis
demanded his Lordship, with a warmth unust
to him. And he relapsed into his form
sullen moodiness, and shortly after l
the room; Mr. Barham remaining rooted
the spot, lost in wonderment at Maria Wi
being considered by Lord Warringdo
as one of the prettiest women he had ev
seen.

"Well! I am sure I never should hav
thought of any one admiring her as a beauty
Her eyes are not bad, I think—and she ha
good white teeth,—but then her skin is horri
brown: and her mouth so very wide, the wid
est I ever saw, except Mr. Mc Alpine's.—
Perhaps it is her figure that he admires, som
people like large women, but then she is s
very stout and short. however, he must b
right I suppose, for I know that he is reckone
a better judge of a horse than any man a
Melton."

While thus cogitating, he had placed him

self opposite Maria, and remained staring vacantly into her face, during the whole of the time she was singing.

"What on earth can the fool of a boy be thinking of, I wonder!" said to herself the object of his not very flattering ruminations, as she caught his fixed gaze. "A silver penny for your thoughts, Mr. Barham!"

"My thoughts!" he repeated, hesitating and looking more silly even than usual.—"I was not thinking of any thing particular,—I was only just thinking of you and"—

"Much obliged to ye sir," she interrupted, crossing her hands before her, and dropping a country girl sort of curtsey, "thankee, sir, for your compliment.—Thinking of nothing particular, only of me!"

"Oh, you will kill me if you make me laugh so, Miss Wilmot, you do make such fun of one. Well, I will tell you really what I was thinking. I was thinking how well you were looking this evening,—so handsome!" I may as well say so, he thought, as Lord Warringdon says that she does.

"Poor, foolish boy! I suppose he is tipsy," Maria muttered. Why my dear creature, what

is come over you this evening? you are grown quite civil."

"But am I not always civil to you, Miss Wilmot? I am sure I intend to be so to you, and every body!"

"There again!—me, and every body, bless the dear man!—His compliments are like Penelope's weaving, for he unsays the last moment what he said the moment before,—so you don't care more for me than you do for any one else in the house?"

"Oh, indeed I do, Miss Wilmot, I like you better, a great deal better, than any of them, I like you more than any body I ever knew, except Father John, what a pity it is that priests cannot marry! he and you would be such a nice match! only he is a little too old for you."

"Oh, not at all, if there were no other difficulty than Father John's age, it would be all very well, I would much sooner marry a man old enough to be my father, than I would a person younger than myself,—I could not bear the idea of that!"

"You are quite right, Miss Wilmot,—I wish that every body thought as you do.—

There is Ellen Turner, she was full as old as you, and she wanted greatly to marry me, you know, and a great many other girls too; so you see every body has not such sense as you have, and as for fun, there is nobody like you;—at your ball there was not any girl so droll as you; do you know I was rather disappointed at that night,—first, and foremost, Father John was not there, then no one would dance a jig with me, they were all stiff, and stuck up, like English girls, only they spoke with a brogue, I am sure I never should have taken them to be Irish. Oh, but Miss Wilmot, I had nearly forgotten, you have not told me what you were all laughing at the other day at dinner!"

"I wish to heaven I was once married to him, that I might not be worried in this way, to amuse him!"

She laughed, however, and looked the picture of good humour, while she prepared to gratify her persecuting companion.

And now, we will leave her relating her funniest story, and he laughing his noisiest laugh, and see what has become of the other

couple of lovers; first, however, giv
passing glance at Lady Anne, and M
Alpine, who are engaged in a low and e
conversation; he telling her of the
tenderness which subsists between her
ter and himself; and she listening, w
the smiling attention of a mother,
favourite project has been attained.

CHAPTER VI.

ISABEL did not, indeed, as her mother had conjectured, content herself with flying merely from the room which contained Mr. Mc Alpine, but also from the roof which covered him; in truth, she never stopped to take breath till she had reached a spot in the grounds, of late her favourite haunt, because it had been admired by Lord Warringdon,—and where she had often sauntered with him—a pretty little walk, (just affording room for two,) in a shrubbery, through which ran a clear, rapid, winding stream. She sunk, feverish and tired, upon a bank, and sat for some time, looking up at the moon, and down on the water, as if

she had come out for no other purpose than pay them a visit; at length, however, sh aroused from her inaction, and began pacin up and down the narrow path, and talking herself.

"Yes; *my* hour is come. Warringdon love me, I am sure—but is he sufficiently his own master to be able to follow his inclinations?—and if he be not, what is to become of me?—for now, that Mc Alpine has actually proposed my mother will begin her system of quiet per secution. Oh, do I not know her? Though she is aware full well that my wedding this man will be a step to my burial, she will have no pity on me—no remorse—but will smilingly doom me to that most appalling of all horrible fates, companionship for life with a man my very soul sickens at! And then, to love another, oh that cruel aggravation! from my heart I wish," she said, clasping her hands in agony, "I had never seen Warringdon's face!

"Why?" asked Warringdon, close at her ear.

She screamed faintly at beholding near her the very face she had just been wishing never to have seen,—and

"My Lord," she said, drawing up her graceful figure, "you have acted unwarrantably in thus intruding on me," and was in the act of moving away, when stopped by Lord Warringdon.

"No, no," he said, taking her hand, "you must not go till you have answered my question. Why do you wish that you had never seen me?"

"Oh that I was dead!" she cried, bursting into a passion of tears, and struggling to disengage her hand.

"Nay, dear, gentle Isabel, you must not wish to die, but to live—to live for me!" he said, pressing to his lips the fair hand he still continued to retain.

The young Viscount happened to be one of those people who cannot bear to look upon anguish, though they may have little remorse about causing it—he could not therefore contemplate, unmoved, the unostentatious sorrow of a woman who devotedly loved him, and whom he in return also loved, not devotedly to be sure, but at any rate as well as he could any thing that was not himself.

He had come out to seek her he scarcely

knew why, and had found her calling in g
on his name: is it very surprising, then, if
once in his life, he was guilty of imprudenc

Kind reader, pray imagine half an h
or thereabouts, spent in assurances of atta
ment, as sincere for the moment, on the Y
count's part, as on that of his fair compani

When they returned to the drawing-roo
they found Lady Anne and Mr. McAlpine s
in close chat; and Maria still talking, a
Mr. Barham still laughing.

One glance at the daughter told the mot
all that had occurred; and her heart bound
although her face remained calm as usual.

"I am very much obliged to you, my Lo
for bringing in that naughty girl of mi
Dear child, you should not walk by moo
light; 'tis very unwholesome indeed. Y
will have such a cold to-morrow, my sw
love! Now, my dear girl, I must insist
your going to bed immediately. Mr. McAlp
—may I trouble you to touch the bell—I w
to know whether there be a fire in her roo
Maria, you look pale, my love, after yo
dancing last night. Go to your beds, both
you, my sweet girls!"

Need we observe that Lady Anne was anxious to break up the party, that she might have an opportunity of eliciting from his Lordship a declaration in form, before he should have had time to sleep off any portion of his present vivid impressions, in the same way as she had just succeeded in entrapping Mr. Mc Alpine into promising his vote. By dismissing her daughters, she also disembarrassed herself of Mr. Barham, who ran after Maria, to hear the sequel of her last story; and of Mr. Mc Alpine, who trailed after Isabel, to have "one last look of her he adored," before he retired to rest.

"God bless you! pleasant dreams!" his hostess said, giving him a significant, affectionate nod.

As soon as she found herself alone with the Viscount, Mr. Wilmot and Mr. O'Reilly being too absorbed in politics to be any restraint on her, she thus opened the attack:—

"Can you keep a secret, my Lord? Mr. Mc Alpine has this evening proposed for Isabel;" and her face beamed with maternal joy and tenderness.

"Indeed! and is he accepted?" the Viscount enquired carelessly.

"Surely!" she replied.

"That is to say, accepted by your Ladyship, but not by your Ladyship's daughter, I take it."

"Why, how do you know?" she asked with well-feigned alarm.

"Only because to my knowledge she has accepted somebody else."

"Somebody else! Impossible, my Lord!—who could she prefer to Mr. Mc Alpine?"

"A very inferior person, I certainly must allow," he replied coolly, "for the object of her preference happens to be my unworthy self."

"You, my Lord!—you must surely be jesting. I never was aware that you admired my daughter, or that she was attached to you—you cannot therefore be serious."

The Viscount repeated his assertion.

"I must say then, my Lord, that both you and she have placed me in a very awkward situation. As for my daughter, her conduct is most shameful and disingenuous; she has suffered me actually to pledge myself to Mr. Mc Alpine; what *am* I to say to him?" and she appeared much agitated and displeased.

"Oh, say merely that you and your daughter are of different opinions with respect to his merit; and that the young lady happens to have bad taste, and prefers me,—that's all."

"Early in our acquaintance, if I mistake not, I informed your Lordship how my daughter was circumstanced; permit me to add, that you have not acted towards me with the openness my confidence merited."

The Viscount looked at her composedly, but said nothing.

"However," she continued, "I leave my daughter free to decide between her suitors; of course her choice concerns herself more than it does me; all I wish is that she had known her own mind a little sooner, and could have spared me the pain of having to undeceive Mr. Mc Alpine;"—then making as it were an effort to be civil, she added, "I trust that you will not attribute any portion of the regret I feel (and which I do not hesitate to acknowledge), at the failure of my favourite project, to a want of personal consideration for your Lordship. I am perfectly aware how many mothers would rejoice in

securing so flattering a connexion for their daughters. But, my Lord, recollect that I have known Mc Alpine from boyhood up to the present moment, and a more noble-minded, amiable being there never breathed! His love for Isabel is absolute idolatry; I could therefore have no doubt of his making her happy. Then again, my Lord, some little selfishness mingled with my other feelings. I was anxious to have my favourite child settled near me, that I might still watch over her with a mother's care; and should, by any possibility, some slight misunderstanding occur in the young *menage*, I could explain and advise, and dear Mc Alpine would have listened to me with all the deference of a son, for he knows I love him like a son of my own. Poor fellow, what a blow this will be to him! I quite dread to meet him!"

"What a long tiresome story about nothing!" said the Viscount to himself.

"Well, Lady Anne, all I can say is that I regret to have been the occasion of disturbing such glowing visions of domestic felicity. I is certainly peculiarly unfortunate that you have not been able to inspire your daughtet

with your enthusiasm for Mr. Mc Alpine. But there is no accounting for the strange fancies of young ladies, sometimes; they do not always see with their mama's eyes, and so much the worse for themselves; but, my dear Lady Anne, it is twelve o'clock!—time for honest folks like you and me to go to bed.—*Bon soir!*"

His hostess held out her hand to him, with a smile grave, but kind, just the smile in fact which a mother gives the man she accepts, but does not rejoice in, as a son-in-law.

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Mc Alpine had been all night dreamin
of his Isabel, and was now lying absorbed i
blissful anticipations of the happy time whe
he and the "beloved of his soul," would g
sailing about the lake, opposite "the Castle,
making love; when the door softly opened
and Tom Landnigan, his own man, made hi
appearance.

"Is that you, Tom?"

"It is sir, veritably:" answered Tom.

"Is Miss Isabel up yet, Tom?"

"She is, sir. I have a bit of a letter sh
gave me for you, about half-an-hour ago, si
but I was loth to disturb you, coming in wi
it."—

"Ah, that's the way to dale with the women—lave them to themselves, and you see how soon they come running after us! The little rogue is afraid now I am displeased, because I did not follow her out of the room, when she made off from me last night, and thinks to get round me again. My gentle crature, I never could be angry with you, even for a moment:" said Mr. Mc Alpine, to himself. "Tom, open the shutters and give me the letter—and fetch me the warm water, till I dress."

Mr. Mc Alpine carried the perfumed missive of "the lady whom he served," to his lips, and then broke the seal.

Instead of "my adored Peter," he was surprised to read, "my valued friend." He looked at the signature; it was Anne, not Isabel Wilmot; but the similarity of handwriting of the mother and daughter had more than once produced similar mistakes. He, however, read on—

"This is the seventh attempt I have made this morning to address you; I have in vain sought words strong enough to depict my feelings; my affection for you, my indigna-

tion against Lord Warringdon, and my sur
prise and deep displeasure at my daughter
unparalelled duplicity.

"When you first paid your addresses to her
I had reason to believe her ardently, though
secretly, attached to you; I, therefore, did all
in my power to encourage your attentions.
find, but too late, that I have misled you
that I have deceived you, in fact, but alas
my noble, confiding young friend, believe me
I was myself deceived, and I regret to add
by my own child.

"On mentioning to Lord Warringdon, in
the joy of my heart, last night, the fulfilment
of my long cherished hope, namely, the union
between you and the dearest of all my chil-
dren, he acquainted me that my daughter had
been for some time engaged to himself; her
reluctance, therefore, to answer you a short
time before, which we both naturally attribut-
ed to mere girlish nonsense and timidity, was,
it now appears, occasioned by a consciousness
of her unworthy double-dealing conduct by
you and myself.

"I have passed a miserable night, and am
totally unable this morning to meet you;

overpowered as I am by shame and wretchedness.

"Though I may not call you son, continue to regard me as your friend. Allow me to hope that we may yet meet as heretofore, when the present painful impression on our minds shall have worn away. Meanwhile, my amiable, excellent young friend, accept my fervent prayers for your happiness, and above all, for your wedded happiness with a woman more worthy your generous and romantic feelings, than, I grieve to say, my misjudging and ungrateful daughter has proved herself to be.

Ever believe me,
sincerely and affectionately yours,
ANNE WILMOT."

If the fair writer of the epistle found herself, as she states, totally unable to "depict" her own feelings, we may be pardoned if we confess ourselves equally at a loss to describe those of the reader of it. He laid down the letter, and he took it up again; he rubbed his eyes, and he twisted his night-cap from side to side, as he tried to ascertain whether he

was sleeping or waking. He, the tender, r fined, romantic, intellectual, impassioned, ca tivating Peter Mc Alpine, rejected! and paltry, titled man of fashion preferred! H astonishment and indignation knew n bounds. At first, he intended leaving Castl Wilmot before breakfast, and not again meet ing the undeserving and ungrateful object o his late adoration; but a few moments' con sideration convinced him that a ride o seventeen miles, Irish ones, moreover, fasting would be an exploit equally disagreeable an unnecessary, seeing there was no reason tha because he happened to be a rejected lover, h should also be a starved man—so he decided (wisely as we think,) not only on eating his breakfast, previous to his departure, but even of making as good a one as ever he had done in all his life before, whether in or out of love.

"After all," he soliloquized as he descend- ed the stair-case, "'tis worse for her than for me, a great dale. I have ten thousand a year in actual possession. Warringdon's father may live to make an old man of him, and, maintime, he will often be hard run for money;

and as for the men themselves, I flatter myself—" and he grinned with much self-complacency, "no one but herself would make a comparison."

He found all the party, with the exception of Lady Anne, and Mr. O'Reilly assembled. Lord Warringdon and Isabel chatting at the window; she looking very pretty, and he, very, very gallant. Maria, as usual, "killing" Mr. Barham.

Mr. Wilmot and his eldest daughter advanced, and shook hands with their guest—and Lord Warringdon and Isabel bowed.

"Where is Lady Anne and Mr. O'Reilly?" he enquired, in his usual tone.

"Mamma is very unwell, indeed," replied Maria; "so much so that she has ordered her breakfast up to her room: and Mr. O'Reilly was sent for express, very early this morning, by one of his parishioners."

"How funny Mr. Mc Alpine must feel!" Barham observed, in a whisper, to Maria, who had just been imparting to him the domestic intelligence of the day. "If I asked somebody to marry me, and that she would not have me, I should feel so odd, should not

you? but I never intend marrying,—don't you think I am right, Miss Wilmot?"

Maria assured him that she highly approved his determination.

"I am very glad your sister is going to make such a good match! but I wish he had chosen you instead of her:—should you like to be married, Miss Wilmot?"

"No!" replied Maria.

"Oh, but I wish you were, though;—you would keep such a nice, pleasant house! would you not ask me to it, for the sake of old times, and all the laughing we have had together?"

"Oh, whenever I marry, I intend that you shall consider my house as your home, Mr. Barham!"

"I am sure I am greatly obliged to you, Miss Wilmot. I should so like to be at your house! Now, will you promise me one thing? wherever you are married, will you ask me to your wedding? I would come any distance to it."

"I promise you," replied Maria, holding out her hand to him, "that as sure as I shall be at my own wedding, so sure shall you!"

"Oh! thank you, thank you, Miss Wilmot! I hope it will be soon."

"So do I, from the bottom of my heart!" said Maria to herself.

"What a lot of ham and chicken and things Mr. Mc Alpine is eating," Barham continued; "I never should take him for a rejected lover, should you?"

"Have you any commands, ladies and gentlemen, for Mount Pleasant?" Mr. Mc Alpine enquired: "I shall start from here in an hour's time."

"Oh, you must not go so soon, Mc Alpine; stay with us a little longer," Mr. Wilmot insisted, good-naturedly.

"Thank you, I ra'ally cannot. Lord Templemore has been for some time extramely pressing with me to go and see him, and I promised him faithfully I would. when I saw him here the other day: what a pleasant, good-humoured man he is! and his daughters I like of all things, particularly Lady Mary; I danced with her at your ball, and I was ra'ally extramely interested in her conversation; though not strictly handsome, she is a very stylish-looking girl, and has a

great dale of mind;" and he glanced over
Isabel, as much as to say, "you see I do
intend wearing the willow for you."

Lord Templemore had, in fact, for some ti
been supposed very desirous of bestowing o
of his five frightful daughters on his frie
Mr. Mc Alpine. Hitherto, however, the go
Earl's generous intentions had been frustra
ed by Mr. Mc Alpine's own opposition to t
scheme; but now, thanks to Miss Isabel W
mot's blindness, that obstacle was remove
and Mr. Mc Alpine gallopped from the ha
door of Castle Wilmot with the intention
raising one of Lady Pemberton's to the e
viable station of wife to a "man of mind."

And now that the stimulus afforded
Mc Alpine's pretensions no longer existe
Lady Anne began to apprehend that t
Viscount's passion might cool; she, the
fore, decided on leaving Castle Wilmot a
removing to the assize town, where the can
date would have so much electioneering bu
ness on hand, as to leave him no leisure f
repentance or *ennui*. It was, therefore, s
tled that Lord Warringdon, Mr. Barham, t
Miss Wilmots, and their mamma, were to

off immediately, leaving Mr. Wilmot ostensibly to send down the freeholders, but, we have reason to think that the motive assigned was not the real one; and we believe that the father of the Miss Wilmots was just as anxious to keep out of sight of the High Sheriff as the young ladies were to keep within that of their two English guests.

CHAPTER VIII.

On the evening previous to the day appoin
for the opening of the poll, a small group
gentlemen stood at one of the windows
Lord Warringdon's committee-room, looki
out on the laughing, shouting, good-humou
crowd, assembled in the street below.

"There is not a man of Archer's in to
yet," said Malony, one of Lord Warringdo
committee, to another gentleman of his p
ty; "he will never come to the poll,—y
will see."

"Oh, I hope he will, though," interrup
Mr. Barham, who was leaning half out of
window, contemplating this noisy scene w

infinite glee; "or else I shall lose all the sport, and I may never happen to see another Irish election. What capital fun it must be, to be sure!"

"Aye, faith it is, capital fun indeed!" observed Mr. Malony. "What do you say, my lord," he continued, addressing the Viscount, "to my having carried a dozen messages, on one election, for Mr. Wilmot, and sending six on my own account? He fought five of his, but all mine apologized, — the blackguards!"

"Oh, what famous fun it must be! I hope in goodness there will be a contest, Mr. Malony, don't you?"

"Why, to say the truth, for my own share, I would desire nothing better, but, of course, on Lord Warringdon's account, I wish there may not be one."

"Oh, what harm would it do him!" Barham asked.

"Why, my dear fellow, do you know the expense of a contested election?"

"Psha! what is the use of money, but to amuse oneself? I am sure I would rather spend it on fun than on any thing else in the wrold."

"Well, what do you say now, O'Reilly? Mr. Malony demanded triumphantly!—"do you still hold out that there will be a contest?"

"Yes,—for Archer's friends speak as resolutely as ever."

"Pooh! they may bluster, but, take my word for it, they will never come to the poll. Hav'nt we all the great interests of the county? and which have they? not even Mc Alpine's."

"Don't be too sure of him, I advise you; Archer has been for the last week at Mount Pleasant, tampering, you will find, with Lord Templemore, and talking over Mc Alpine."

"Talking over the devil, man!" exclaimed Malony impatiently,—"how can he go in the teeth of his promise?—did he not tell Lady Anne and Mr. Wilmot his and their interest should go together?"

"And would this be the first time of his saying one thing, and doing another? Don't you know he is an eel, that can wriggle himself out of the closest tied and most elaborately constructed knot, ever devised by the ingenuity of man?—more particularly on this

occasion, that he has wounded feelings to talk about."

"Ha ha ha!—the deuce mend him! Isabel Wilmot served him right, cursed, prosing fool! but no matter for that, he promised, and there's an end of it;—he can't, he dare not—go back at it. If he owes you a grudge," Mr. Malony continued turning to Lord Warringdon, "in the name of God, why does he not call you out, and shoot you at once;—that would be a handsome, gentlemanlike way of settling the business. But curse it! to break one's promise to a man, because he and you happened to like the same girl, and she chose you rather than him,—*that* would be confoundedly shabby!—I tell you what, my Lord, if I had been in his place, I would have shot you as dead as a door nail; but I would have voted for you all the same, because I promised."

"Ha ha ha! bravo, paddy! shoot him first, and vote for him afterwards! Oh, what a capital bull!" shouted Barham, clapping Malony on the back.

"I did not say so, man,"—Malony replied rather sulkily.

"Oh you did! you positively did!' 'I have shot you as dead as a door nail, but would have voted for you all the same,'- those were your very words; oh 'tis a regul bull!" and Barham rubbed his hands, wi delight.

"It is no bull at all, I tell you," insiste Mr. Malony. "Pray why might I not shoo him, and vote for him at the same time?—vot for him first of course, and shoot him after wards. You should not take a man up till h is down, my good fellow."

"Oh, but you *were* down! the way yo say it now is not the way you said it a first,—no no! that's no go. It was a regula bull! so there's no use in denying it. I hop I shan't forget to tell it to Miss Wilmot, wha fun we shall have!"

"Take a friend's advice, and make fun o something else," said Mr. Malony slowly an emphatically.

"I don't see why I may not laugh at yo as well as any body else, Mr. Malony?"

"You must not, if I bid you not."

"Oh, yes, I shall though," Barham in sisted with boyish obstinacy.

"I tell you once more, that I advise you not," said Mr. Malony, looking very dark.

"Suppose I don't choose to take your advise, what then?" queried Barham.

"Why then I will shew an English ass what he gets by meddling with an Irish bull!" and the tall and formidable Mr. Malony squared his broad shoulders, and scowled from beneath his heavy beetle brows, at the simple wilful boy.

"An English ass!" cried Barham, his smooth, almost childish, face repaying, as well as it was able, the menacing looks of his antagonist: "how dare you call me an English ass?"—and his hand was raised to suit the action to the words, when his arm was arrested by Mr. O'Reilly.

"Nonsense, Barham, he did not mean it—it was only a jest."

"A jest! no no,—I am not quite greenhorn enough to be made believe that a thing is a jest which is not one. Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly, not quite ass enough for that!—Let me go, I say!" and Barham struggled violently, though ineffectually, in O'Reilly's grasp.

"Malony," said the young priest, who, virtue of the sanctity of his profession, mig venture to approach the tiger in his wrat "is it worth while to quarrel with a friend f a foolish word?—any man may take a jest,- come; say that you are sorry for the expre sions you made use of, and shake hands,- Malony!"

"Mr. O'Reilly, mind your own busine if you please, and don't give yourself an trouble about mine," Mr. Malony replied.

"Let me go, let me go!" Barham sti continued to vociferate, I want to give hi his answer.

"And what might that answer be?" de manded Mr. Malony.

"A pitch into your face!" roared M Barham.

"Now we are quits then!" replied Malon tossing his glove to Barham. "Any one tha wants me," he added, looking at the youn Englishman, "will find me at Costelloe's hote Good morning to you, gentlemen!" and h stalked out of the room very like an angr turkey-cock.

"You have done a very silly thing, Ba

ham," said O'Reilly, "to think of quarrelling with the greatest fire-eater in the county, for the sake of a stupid jest, I wish you had not said what you did about the blow, and we might have got you out of it, after all!"

"And pray how do you know, Mr. O'Reilly, that I wanted you to get me out of it?—do you think I am afraid of him?—no,—nor would'nt if he was twice as big and as savage as he is.—I don't care one straw about himself, or his fire-eating, I can tell him. Oh, Lord Warringdon, we are both English,—will you then be my Friend, and take a message for me to him?"

"Why I should indeed be most happy to oblige you, my dear Barham," replied his Lordship, "but you are aware that Mr. Malony is one of my most zealous and efficient electioneering friends; so that I could not possibly act against him."

"Oh, very well, I must only do the best I can;" and Barham sallied forth in quest of a friend, (a friend?) to arrange preliminaries for getting himself shot, or making him shoot another person as soon as possible.

"I must go immediately, and have th
bound over," said O'Reilly.

"Do, for pity's sake!" replied the Viscou
"it would be a cursed nuisance," he add
as the door closed after O'Reilly, and he w
left alone, "if this Malony should be sh
it would place me in a very ticklish positi
with regard to my election. Confound t
pair of them, they deserve to be both shot
their folly!" and his lordship looked over
memorandum book, to see how many remai
on his lists, to be conciliated,—and how,
why—

CHAPTER IX.

"Did ye hear the report, Miss Maria?" asked Pat Murphy, the following morning after he had in vain fidgetted about the room, in hopes of exciting her attention, or that of Lady Anne.

"No, what report, Pat?"

"The one, Miss, about Mr. Barham and Mr. Molony."

"Why, what has happened to them?"

"A terrible thing, Miss — t'was Jim Naughten tould me, an' he has a good right to know, wherein, t'was himsel' that dhruv him—he couldn't think what in the world was the matther whin Misther Costelloe called

him out of his sleep this morning, and says he to him, Jim, says he—"

"Oh, never mind, Pat," interrupted Maria, "what Mister Costelloe said to Jim, only tell us at once what Jim said to you."

"Sure, Miss, that's what I'm doin' — all I'm tellin' you is what Jim tould me."

"'Jim,' says Misther Costelloe, 'get up this minute, an' dhrive as fast as if the divil was at your heels, to the barracks, for Misther Barham that's goin' to fight a duel with Mr. Molony, beyant at Kilmore, at break o' day."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Lady Anne, "Barham gone to fight with Malony! 'Tis all over with us, my dear Maria," she added, in a low voice; "and after all the trouble we have had! It is really too provoking."

"Bad enough," replied Maria, in the same tone; "however, you know all is not always lost that is in danger. Come, Pat, finish your story, and as quickly as you can."

"I will, Miss."

"By the powers, then, says Jim, I'm goin' to dhrive a man I'll niver dhrive agin any how, the crature, if it's wid Mr. Malony he's

goin' to fight, Misther Costelloe; for he's the divil itsel' wid the pistuls, the greatest fire-ater in the Province, barrin' the masther."

"Och, Jim," says Mr. Costelloe, "who is there we'd think of comparing with Mr. Wilmot, in regard of fire-ating; he's the wondher of Ireland, not to talk of the Province, Jim."

"You never seen a man, mee lady, fondher of another than what Mr. Costelloe is of the masther;—and good right he has, troth;—isn't it the masther made him what he is? and Mrs. Costelloe fondher agin, an'—"

"Oh yes, I am sure they are, Pat, as fond as possible of my father, and we are greatly obliged to them, but go on, and tell us what has become of Mr. Barham," interrupted Maria, rather impatiently.

"Well, Miss, Jim got up, and dhruve Mr. Barham, and his second, Capt. Williams, the fine cliver-looking gentleman that was up at the Castle the night of the ball, you remember, Miss? an Englishman, with big whiskers. Well, Father O'Reilly thought to bind 'em over, an' sint to Costelloe's to thry and catch 'em; but, faith, Misther Malony was too many for him; and he hid himsel' and Misther

Barham between the matthrasses of one
the beds, and there they were suffocating, a
afeard o' their lives they'd be nabbed, but b
great good look they warn't; not but, indeed
Misther Barham a'most ruined it all by hi
foolishness, laughin' so, you'd think the lif
would lave him, shakin' undher the bed, an
Misther Malony fit to be tied, he was so ma
wid him, but not darin' to spake, for fear woul
the pace officers hear him. Well, as soon a
they wint, he made Misther Barham go slee
at the barracks, to be out of harum's way, an
he wint himsel' to a frind of his at Kilmore
to be on the spot airly."

"Well, and how are they both now, Pat?"
demanded both ladies at once, taking advan
tage of the narrator's stopping to draw hi
breath.

"Faith, mee Lady, badly enough. Misthe
Malony is kilt as dead as a herring, and Mis
ther Barham is lying, not expected to live, a
a small public house Father O Reilly brough
him to."

"Heavenly Powers!" exclaimed Lady Anne

"I never believe half what I hear," ob
served Maria. "What was the quarrel about
Pat?"

"About a lady, Miss."

"A lady!" cried Maria, "what lady?"

"Pat, order the carriage! I will see O'Reilly immediately, that is the only way of ascertaining the truth of the story."

"If he should die?" said Lady Anne.

"It would be a bad business:" answered Maria.

"Deplorable, indeed!" sighed Lady Anne.

She stepped into her carriage, and drove off.—

The streets were thronged with Castle Wilmot freeholders hurrahing, and shouting "Warringdon for ever,"—Jim Naughten's report of the English lord's generosity, and of his being in "every perticklar, the thruth of a gintleman," (in support of which assertion, the compliment of the five pound note was not forgotten,) had already secured him an overwhelming majority of the dhrivers, butchers, grocers, and butchers' and grocers' boys, waiters, ostlers, carmen, beggars, and such like gentry of the town—and Jim was now flying about in all directions, waving his hat, and jumping over his stick, collecting his boys,

and exhorting them for the honour of God, and of their town, to be sure and break the head of every Archer, who should dare shew himself in their free, loyal, and religious streets.

Here might be seen groups of gentlemen, gesticulating and thumping one another's shoulders, in their eagerness to prove, for the hundredth time, a position already admitted as incontrovertible; viz., the superior wisdom, valour, and social importance of every individual composing the party to which they belonged, and of the consequent certainty of their triumph. A little further on might be observed some member of the Roman Catholic priesthood, more quietly, but not less zealously, haranguing an attentive audience on the liberal and enlightened principles of the Right Honourable Viscount, who was proclaimed by them, and admitted by their listeners, to be an honour to England, and anticipated as a blessing to Ireland.

Nor were the female part of the population indifferent spectators of the preparations for the approaching struggle, which engrossed their husbands, fathers, lovers, brothers, or

friends; there they were, elbowing, scolding, and all but shooting whoever presumed to gainsay their fiat, that Lord Warringdon, and none but he, should be returned for their town.

The ladies being among his most zealous advocates, — first, because he was *not* an Orangeman; and, secondly, because he was young and handsome:—the old ones might be seen hurrying to chapel to pray for him, while the young ones, sauntering up and down the square, listening to the band, or standing looking out at window, flirted for him; exhorting those already his friends, confirming the vacillating, and endeavouring, by smiles, or poutings, to cajole, or frighten, his declared enemies,—kneeling to some, almost embracing others; and how could they do less for so handsome, so gallant a candidate, who had given a ball at the assembly-rooms, and had danced with "every girl of consequence" in the room? Besides, he had such beautiful dark eyes, and he made such an elegant bow, and another besides, which they did not, however, add, but which we will do for them,— "Besides, he had all the dashing young men of the county on his side!"

Nor were the females of lower degree le energetic in his behalf, groups of them we gathered round the shop doors, or hall doo insisting to one another, and all of the wo thier gender (*soi disant,*) they could get listen to them, "that it would be a murth outright, a mortal sin, troth it would, to di appoint such a darlin', purty, free-spoke free-givin' gintleman, the frind and son-i law to be of misther Wilmot, the Lord pro per and purtect him!"

We say that all this "*might* be seen," b we do not take upon ourselves to assert th Lady Anne observed all, or, indeed, any the bustling, good-humoured, lively scen passing around her, so completely was h interest in Warringdon's election lost in h fears for Barham's life.

She was roused from her somewhat unple sant reflections, by loud and vehement shou of welcome, from the mob of the town, an "loyal" and affectionate greetings from th Castle Wilmot tenantry, when they recognize the carriage, as Bartly Kilfoy tried to ste it through the dense mass of human being which encumbered its progress without ove turning it or crushing them.

"High for her ladyship! high for the masther! hurrah for the English lord! Warringdon for ever! Wilmot for ever! success to them, and the divil's curse to their inemies!" and various other equally "neat and appropriate" expressions of zeal and attachment, were poured forth in chorus from hundreds of rough throats.

"Whisht, boys, whisht! and God bless ye!" cried Bartly Kilfoy, "or y'ell frighten the horses!"

"Frightin 'em! is it the Castle Wilmot horses to be frightined at the boys hurrahing for their master? faith, they have a good right to be used to it, by this time, any how."

But the Castle Wilmot horses, like some ladies, were capricious animals, and chose, despite of the good reason just adduced, to be nervous and agitated, so they began to plunge, and lash, Bartly Kilfoy to coax and curse by turns, and Lady Anne to scream.

"Never fear, my lady, never fear!" cried the wild crowd, around her. "Take them stupid bastes off, Bartly, and we'll dhraw her ladyship ourselves."

And now a violent contest ensued between

Just at that moment, Mr. O'Reilly appeared; flung himself in the midst of the crowd, and down went the sticks at once.

"'Tis our own town, you know, father O'Reilly!" one party submissively represented.

"We are her own boys:" expostulated the others.

"I am ashamed of ye all, town and country;" answered the young priest, "gather up your sticks and hats, you quarrelsome, good for nothing fellows, and begone! a pretty way, indeed, of shewing your respect for a lady, to frighten her out of her senses—I am ashamed of ye!"

"My dear O'Reilly," said Lady Anne, "I have been in search of you for the last hour, to hear something about unfortunate Barham, he is mortally wounded, I understand."

"Oh no! no such thing—'tis a mere flesh wound, and he will be as well as ever, in a day or two."

"Thank God!" piously ejaculated Lady Anne.

"But," he continued, "poor Molony's arm is broken."

antagonist, who was shouting with pain and enthusiasm.

"For heaven's sake, Molony, how could you be mad enough to come here with a broken arm?" asked O'Reilly, who had run after the duellists of the morning, and bosom-friends of mid-day.

"What matter about it? I wanted to see the sport, I was going mad there at Costelloe's listening to the hurrahing, and I, in bed, having nothing to do with it. I begged the doctor, and people for God sake to let me come, but they wouldn't—so I waited awhile, and presently they all set off here, and left me—and then I got up softly and went to Barham's room, to ask him to help me on with my clothes, and there I found him dressing too, so we agreed to come away together—we nicked them, didn't we Barham?"

"I think," observed O'Reilly smiling, "that you will find yourself 'nicked' into a fever-a-piece for this exploit."

"Capital fun!" exclaimed Barham, "do you know, Malony, I was just thinking how droll it is that you and I should be here such good friends, arm in arm, after what happened this morning?"

"Oh, not at all, my dear fellow—you are

plays of the same nature, throughout the united Empire, with the addition, in this case, of much vehement and energetic declamation in favour of civil and religious liberty, and assurances of his ardent zeal in the "great cause."

His oration was received with loud acclamation, and cries of "Warringdon for ever! The true friend of Ireland and the county! no double daling in him! but comes to the point at once, and spakes his mind plainly."

Mr. Archer then came forward, and was received with groans, and hisses, not a few, cries of "Down with the orangeman! down with the black protestant! that wants to keep all the loaves and fishes to himself! and down with the thraitors and tyrants that support him! to the divil wid them all!"

The shew of hands was declared, by the High Sheriff, to be in favour of Viscount Warringdon. But Mr. Archer's friends demanded a poll; and accordingly, a man was polled on each side, and the court-house was soon after cleared of its noisy occupants, both parties talking big of their hopes of the morrow, when the "battle" was to begin in earnest.

with a safe conscience, that the life in it was still in existence," and other trifling, though necessary, arrangements, for the proper carrying on of their employer's interests; and voters were eating, drinking, shouting, laughing, and whirling their ferrals to give them "the raal fighting touch," and among the noisiest of the noisy, as in duty bound, were the Castle Wilmot boys, who strove hard, by all the means in their power, to keep up the honour of "the family," and make as much riot as possible.

"Which of you has seen or heard any thing of Mc Alpine?" demanded Mr. Malony, as he entered Lord Warringdon's committee-room, his face flushed from pain and impatience.

"Still at Mount Pleasant, I suppose," replied one of the group he addressed.

"Still at Mount Pleasant! confound him! what is he doing there?"

"Making love to Lady Mary Pemberton, I hear."

"Making love to the devil, man!—why isn't he here? who ever heard of a man leaving his freeholders to themselves in this way? how can he tell who they vote for when he's

dare not call their souls their own? Do you think they would have the courage to vote against his orders? not they."

"But, Mr. Malony, what do you say, if 'tis by his orders they are voting?"

"Do you suppose he wants to have cold lead lodged in his brains?" quietly demanded, in his turn, Mr. Malony.

"But, my dear sir, have you ascertained that Mr. Mc Alpine *has* sent down his men for Mr. Archer?" queried the Viscount.

"Why, my Lord, I have it on good authority that he has. A sister of Pat Sullivan's wife (Mr. Mc Alpine's foster-brother, you know, Mr. Malony) told Mrs. Mc Donogh's daughter's husband, a first cousin of her own, and nurse to Mr. Wilmot, that Mr. Mc Alpine's agent, Misther Fahy, had sent back orders to Pat Sullivan, for all the men, them that lived by the say-side, and them that did not, to come down by wather, unknownst, for fear would any of the Castle Wilmots murdher 'em, if they come by the road; but to take care for his life would Pat Sullivan let on, 'twas his masther that bid him."

Here "Rascal, scoundrel, blackguard, liar,

challenge written, and nothing to do but to dash it off; and even if we shouldn't want it for him, we shall for somebody else; with a few alterations, you know, the same copy will serve for a dozen different people."

Lord Warringdon did not much relish the idea of an assortment of ready-made challenges, but, however, he was too prudent to object to the proposal; and, in a very few minutes, a letter full of flogging, posting, and shooting, dictated by Mr. Malony, and penned by his lordship, was read aloud, to the great delight and admiration of the company at large.

"Do you know, I am in great hopes that you will have to fight Mc Alpine: it would make you so popular with the mob! for the fighting candidate has always the best chance, you know, of being the sitting member. I assure you, Mr. Wilmot would not have kept the county so long, but for his handiness with the pistols. He fought four men one morning before breakfast, and wounded them all,—don't you remember, O'Leary?" Mr. Malony added, turning to the electioneering agent, *en chef*.

"Aye, faith, Mr. Malony, but he was left for dead himself, you recollect."

"I know he was; but what does that signify? he gained his return by it, and never would else; for the opposite party, by bribing and tricking, and telling lies, of one kind or other, had contrived to get eight hundred ahead of us, and we had but three days left to pull up. Well, my Lord, the mob got outrageous when they heard Mr. Wilmot was badly wounded, and they threatened to burn the town, if he died without being elected. In all your life you never saw such a row; the women running about screeching, and clapping their hands, and swearing they'd have the lives of them that took his; the men shouting, and cursing like mad. I had my skull fractured by the way, but only in a mistake, you know, the poor fellows took me for somebody else."

"Pleasant mistake!" thought his lordship.

"Well, Mr. Malony, and how did it all end?"

"Oh, as well as possible, my lord: the army was called out, but the Colonel was a friend of ours, and behaved very handsomely,

so we beat the other party fairly out of the town, and Mr. Wilmot was elected that very day."

"Mr. Malony, I beg pardon for interrupting you," said Father John; "hadn't we better see after them Mc Alpines; they'll slip through our fingers else. I was thinking of going myself into the ——— booth, to watch them as they come in, and know the truth at once."

This idea met universal approbation, and accordingly, Father John hurried to the —— booth, the strong hold of the Mc Alpine interest.

A batch of the suspected freeholders had arrived before him, and a ragged, half-starved, miserable-looking creature, was now undergoing the usual interrogatives by the deputy-assessors.

"Who do I wote for, is it? I wote for —— for,—— by my conscience, then, I can't remember the name just at this present minute. Misther Fahy, Misther Fahy! which of 'em is it you tould me to wote for?" demanded the puzzled freeholder, in a stage-whisper.

"By the powers! then, it isn't. I'll vote for neither of 'em;—but for my own masther, Mr. Mc Alpine, and nobody else," replied the persecuted and displeased freeholder.

"Mr. Mc Alpine is not a candidate, my honest man," replied the deputy assessor.

"Well, for Miss Kitty, then!"

This answer was received with shouts of laughter by the Warringdons, and with muttered curses by the Archers.

"Ladies are never elected to serve in parliament, my honest man. You must, therefore, take your choice of the three candidates in question, Viscount Warringdon, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Archer; and make up your mind at once, if you please, for you are stopping the poll all this time."

"Faith! an' with the blessing of God, I won't stop it any longer," and the indignant voter turned suddenly round and took to his heels.

He was succeeded by another of the batch, who got through his lesson more creditably to himself, and Mr. Fahy.

"My blessing to ye, Phanick O'Dea!" said Father John, "how long is it sence you turned Protestant?"

"Sure if it wasn't, would Pat Sullivan be goin' on the way he was, sthrivin' to get us down, and threatnin' our livcs, if we wouldn't be said by him?"

"Michelleen! Mavourneen! are ye there?" Father John cried, turning towards the crowd of Castle Wilmot freeholders and idlers, who crowded the booth.

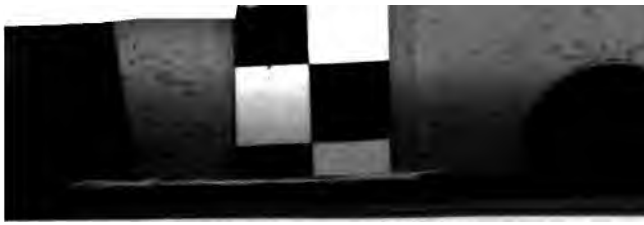
The same little bare-legged, red-headed boy, already introduced to our readers, obeyed the summons, and, after having performed his customary *salam* of pulling forward his hair, and scraping his foot, awaited deferentially the priest's commands.

"Michelleen, be off this minute, as fast as ye can set fut to the ground, to Lord Warringdon's committee-room, and——"

And Michelleen was gallopping off, when recalled by Father John.

"Come back, ye little omadhoun! is it goin' ye are without knowin' what it is ye are goin' for?" He continued,—"go to the committee-room, and tell Mr. Malony I want to spake to him immadiately;—now away with ye, my man!"

In a few minutes Michelleen re-appeared, ushering in Mr. Maloney.



CHAPTER XI.

THE answer to the hostile message arrived in due course, and was as follows:—

MY LORD,

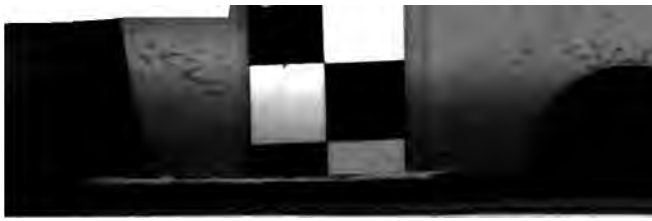
You appear to me to have made an extraordinary mistake, for I am under no promise to support you, nor ever was; you must remember I always declined engaging myself. It is true that I have declared my intention of voting for you, but I never bound myself by a distinct promise. A declaration is one thing,—a promise another. Such being the state of the case between us, I have promised to support Mr. Archer, and cannot see how, in so doing, I deserve the imputation

letter, and I'll go among the tenants. Lave Mc Alpine with me Mr. Malony, and I'll settle him, I promise you."

And now what had been only noise and confusion, became wild tumult, and deafening roar. The freed freeholders of the Mc Alpine estate, found their newly accorded liberty of thinking, and acting for themselves a perillous as well as puzzling privilege; beset on one side by Father John's eloquence, and the Warringdon shillelagh; and on the other, by Mr. Archer's money, and fear of their master.

"Do you want to deny your religion, ye unfortunate misguided cratures?" Father John cried, "oh that ever I should live to see a man of my flock voting for an orange candidate and protestant ascendancy; and the downfall of their own ancient thrue and holy religion! and when I'll be witness agin ye at the last day, that I warned ye, but that yo wouldn't give heed to me, how will it be with ye then, boys?"

"Avoch, Father John, bad enough! sure we'd be said by you afore the world, and why not only for the masther, but Father John?



the world?" the Jim Naughten's boys, and the Castle Wilmot's would roar, whirling their "ferrals."

"For ye, for ye!" cried they, more influenced by the dread of hell-fire in prospect, and of a sound drubbing at the moment, than by love of money, or even fear of being made houseless.

"Success to ye! glory to ye! hurrah for the thrue and staunch friends of their religion; high for the Mc Alpines!" the Warringdon's shouted.

"Ye impident blackguards! ye shall pay for this,—take my word for it, every identical man o' ye!" the infuriated agent vociferated. And, perceiving some signs of vacillation of purpose in the crowd, he added:

"If there are any among ye, will stand by their masther and their cabins, and the bastes, and their children, let 'em come over to my side!"

A few answered the appeal.

"Ah the renegades! the apostates! the vellains;" the Castle Wilmots howled, as they rushed on the small and terrified band.

The yells and shrieks became so appalling,

tary to protect them through "the enemy's country."

They overtook the run-a-ways not far from a village on the Castle Wilmot estate: and first they tried persuasion, then threats; and were proceeding to blows, when the Mc Alpines ran for refuge into the village, and the Archer gentlemen knowing that its male inhabitants were absent at the election, fearlessly pursued them to their retreat, and had already managed to secure a dozen of the less fleet-footed of the poor fellows, when, to their surprise, yells and execrations rose on all sides, and presently there issued from each house, a shrieking, cursing fury, with her dark hair hanging about her shoulders, and her apron full of stones.

"Bad luck to ye, souls an' bodies! how dare ye come next or nigh us! d'ye think because our min is'nt in it, that ye'll not find them that are able for ye? be off this minute, or by the powers, we'll make ye! be off! and don't dare lay your hand on them dacent, quiet, boys, or we won't lave a skreed o' ye together!" so screamed these fair defenders of the Castle Wilmot territory, and of its right

"I should if the assailants were men," replied the young officer. "But what can I do with a mob of women?"

"Hurrah for the red-coats!" shouted the fair rioters, who had stood quiet and silent, while doubtful as to the result of the colloquy between the civil and military authorities; "long life to 'em! 'tis them that knows how to trate the women! not like them cadgers from the town beyant;—them mudhering villians of process sarvers, that's thinkin' to get inside of the masther's son-in-law, the schamers of the world!—"

"It's a long march ye tuk, sir," said the speaker-woman and ringleader of the party, turning to the officer. "May be you would like a dhrop of whiskey and a fresh egg, or some throut out of the river, or a roasted pratee?—if we had betther, we'd give it, but whatever it is, you have the 'cead mille faltha!' with it, any how; and something for your men too, the craturs."

The officer thankfully assented to the proposal, and there was a temporary cessation of hostilities.

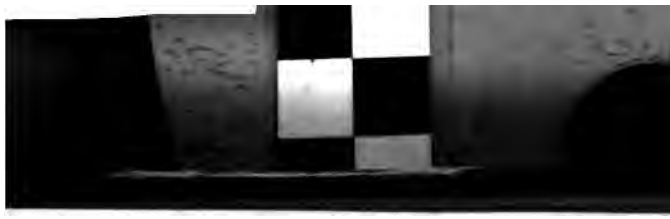
"Make 'em give us back our min, sir,"

said the amazon coaxingly;—"do, and
Lord prosper ye! we won't pelt 'em any m
an' we'll give 'em something to ate into
bargin, for they're starving wid the hun
God help 'em! will ye, *agra*, give us back t
poor craturs?"

The good humoured young man laug
and promised his mediation; but the gen
men scornfully rejected the terms, and
therefore to return faint from want of food,
harassed by the women who hung on their r
pelting and cursing to the very outskirts of
town, which they regained half nearly d
from fatigue, hunger, and bruises. Here t
conducted the freeholders to an eating-hou
where they were ordered "lashings of m
and whiskey," in exchange for their liberty

"This is eligant fine ating, to be s
Thady," observed one of them,—"but h
will it be with us whin we go back? The C
tle Wilmots will murdher us!"

"Faith, they will so," said Jim Naught
who happened just then to walk in, ostensi
to make love to a daughter of the woman
the house, who was a cousin of his own,
truth obliges us to state our belief that



visit was rather diplomatic than gallant; be that as it may, it is more his cousin's affair than ours.

"Faith, you may be sure," continued this Job's comforter, "of as fine a bating as ever ye got in your lives;—I wish I was as sure of a fine estate. Ye must have grate courage, boys, to think of standin' the counthry at all, after doing what ye're goin' to do. Not a fair, nor patthern, ye won't get murdhered at,—an' if you want a hundherd of malt, or a stone of salt, or if your wife has a lock of wool, or a thrifle of flax to sell, troth ye must do without it, or be comin' down every hand's turn by wather, for fear of the Castle Wilmot boys."

"We know that, as well as ye can tell us, Jim," groaned his auditors. "But if we wote agin the masther's ordhers, sorrow a thing we'll have to buy or sell at all; didn't we run out of the town to get quit of 'em all, an' didn't the Archers bring the army a top of us, weren't we made prisoners?"

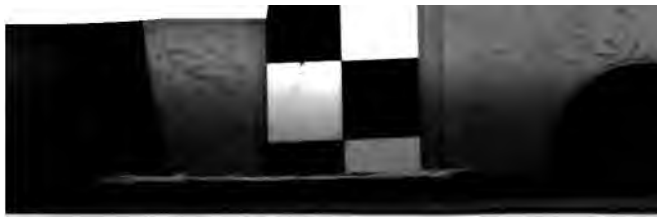
"Why did ye let 'em?"

"Why did ye let 'em, is it? asy said, Jim, but troth, if ye were in it yoursel' you w'd fine it far harder to help, than you think for, I

that's dying every year of the rheumatics; so ye never can tell the minute ye'll come back to your raal masther; he's the one you ought to mind;—the one that owns the land is'nt it boys?—the man that, whether tinant or no, if ye were brought up before the grand jury, for being too fond of mutton, or too ready with the stick, would stand your friend, whin your own masther, as ye call him, w'd be sittin' fair an' asy by his parlor fire, writin' love letthers, or readin' out of a book; an' a negur he is into the bargain, that begrudges a dacent boy that w'd be goin' the road, his bit an' sup, an' a mouthful of hay for his bastes!"

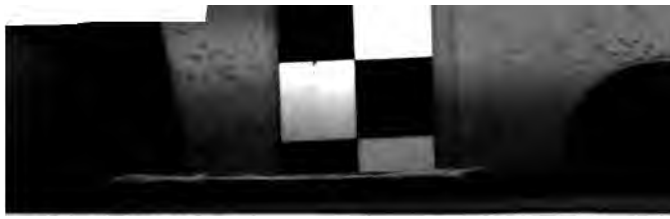
"A thin would he, Tim?" interrogated the much-shocked Letterbroughs.

"A thin would he?" repeated Jim, deridingly;"—Don't ye know he would?—didn't he do it by mysel', an' bad manners to him! but no matther about that now, I wasn't thrustin' to him, thank God, for mate or dhrink; I had my own masther to go to, the Lord be praised; the man that has a sate by his fire, for who's would come in, and lashings of the best of ating an' dhrinking, an' a *cead mille faltha,* an' a tap on the shouldher into



"Oh yea! how will that be at all?" queried the astonished Mc Alpines.

"I'll make ye sinsible of it to-morrow boys,"—replied the orator;—I'll be with ye airly by the first light, an' now God be wid ye!"—and so saying, Jim walked off, shouting his favourite tune of "tattered Jack Welsh," his only regret being, that Winny was not present to be "grigged" by it.



cautiously on the last mark of disapprobation, being deterred by the pistols which peeped from the bosoms of the Archers.

At length the cavalcade reached their destination, and the freeholders were ushered into the —— booth. They were received with loud plaudits by the Archer party, and cries of "Fine fellows! true to their landlord!" and by groans and hisses, curses and ferocious scowls, and muttered threats, by the Warringdons.

"Don't suffer yourselves to be intimidated, my honest men," said Mr. Archer's agent. "The Warringdon party may threaten, but they dare not injure you. Mr. Wilmot is a mighty great man, no doubt," he continued sneeringly, "and his tenants are fine bludgeoneerers, but never you mind; the king happens to be a greater man than Mr. Wilmot; and as for his tenants, the first among them that lifts a stick against ye shall be lodged in the county jail."

"Aye, aye!" shouted the Castle Wilmots, in derision, "when you've caught us! once we are on our own mountains, d'ye think we'll be aisily had? Oh ye! what a chance you have of us! an' so ye think we'll wait for your

after that, as demanded by the Warringdon party, the bribery oath also, and now, having no more plausible objections to make, they suffered the man to proceed.

"Whom do you vote for?" asked the deputy-assessor.

"I vote for Lord Wardherdown," said Thady.

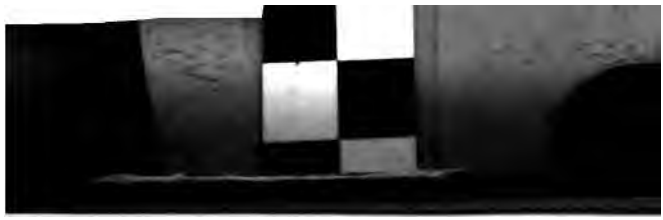
"Warringdon?" repeated the deputy assessor, surprised.

"Warringdon!" echoed the Archer party with rage and astonishment. "Infamous cheating!—shameful! shameful to put between landlord and tenant! setting the county in a blaze! rebels! traitors!"

"Hurrah! hurrah!" the Warringdons shouted. "Thady Sullivan for ever!—chair him! chair him!"

And accordingly they carried Thady on their shoulders round the room.

His example was followed by his companions; and as they were walking off, accompanied by the laughter and acclamations of one party, and execration of the other, Thady turned towards the Archers, and making a low bow, "Thank ye, gentlemen, for the mate



As these broad-shouldered, formidable supporters of Lord Warringdon defiled one after another, Mr. Malony, bringing up the rear, into Lord Templemore's library, he was observed to change colour. He received them very courteously, however, and expressed much regret at seeing Mr. Malony's arm in a sling.

"I am much obliged to your Lordship," replied Mr. Malony; "luckily 'tis only my left arm; I have my right one still, for a case of need, whenever it comes:"—and Mr. Malony squared his shoulders—and Lord Templemore hemmed.

"My Lord," continued Mr. Malony, who had been selected as spokesman of the party, "we have come here this morning on very particular business; to remind you, in fact, on the part of Lord Warringdon, of a circumstance you seem to have forgotton,—namely—your promise of standing neuter between him and Mr. Archer—giving plumpers to Mr. Fitzgerald. Have you kept that promise, my Lord?"

"I am not in the habit of breaking my promises, Mr. Malony," replied Lord Templemore, with much dignity.

lony, accompanying the observation by a look to which the Earl hastened to reply.

"My dear Sir, allow me to explain to you my position with respect to my tenantry in the barony you allude to. They all hold under leases; pay their rent to a day; are never in arrears; in a word, are comfortable, and therefore independent. Well, my property in that neighbourhood borders that of Mr. Archer, and my people say that they will not incur the enmity of the tenantry of an estate close to them, for a stranger like Lord Warringdon, to whom they have no local attachment. In fact, my dear Sir, they have broke loose, the rascals! but they know they are not in my power, and I cannot control them, or—"

"That may be all very true, my Lord," interrupted Mr. Malony, "but all your tenantry are not next neighbours of Mr. Archer's. Give us an equivalent to those that have polled for him in some other barony."

"Most willingly," his Lordship assented eagerly; "or I will consent even to double the number; will that satisfy you, as to my impartiality?"

"Would your Lordship have any objection

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEW mornings after the conversation just detailed, Mr. Malony, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. O'Leary, and half a dozen other friends and partizans, rushed into Lady Anne's drawing-room, shouting out, "Good news—good news! the contest we may say is over: the barony of ——, where Archer's chief force lies, will close in an hour; his men have been beaten back by the mob, so there have been but ten polled there as yet to-day, therefore by four o'clock it must all be over. We are watching them well, for fear they should personate from other baronies, and have left some fellows in the booth to kick up rows, and retard the polling.

"When did it close?" he bawled, Father John not having yet come within speaking distance.

"'Tisn't closed at all," repeated the other.

"What then, man?"

"Opened!" said the priest.

"Opened!" repeated his interrogator, with a look of consternation. "What do you mean, Father John?"

"Why then, indeed, Mr. Malony, I mane just what I say. You know the men Lord Templemore promised us, to make up for those he gave Archer: well, 'tis by them the booth has been kept open, and they have a batch of two hundred for to-morrow, who stole in to-day, while nobody was watching, thinking the election over."

And now who can describe the rage and disappointment of Malony, and the Warringdon party, lately so triumphant, at this blight of their hopes.

"The rascal!" cried Malony, stamping. "Lord Warringdon, you must send him a challenge immediately."

"Oh, yes, yes! of course—cannot possibly be avoided!" simultaneously chimed in all the

most zealous supporter Lord Warringdon has. Murdered, indeed!"

"Oh, I am too miserable to know what I am saying:" and Isabel sank on the first seat near her, looking indeed most "miserable."

Now Mr. Malony could contemplate man's blood with much more philosophy than he could woman's tears, and his heart softened directly.

"I proposed his fighting entirely to serve him, God knows! For that matter, as Lord Templemore made the promise to me, personally, I have the best right to call upon him to keep it; so now, shake hands, and don't say I want to murder him, at any rate," he added, smiling good humouredly.

"But why should it be you either; why should any of you fight; the damage is done, and you can't repair it now," said Isabel, "leave it all as it is. This duelling is such a frightful and savage custom!"

"You! your father's daughter, and be frightened by pistols? you are growing to be a disgrace to the county; and I am not at all sorry you are about to transplant yourself among the quiet English," replied Malony, laughing

Mr. Mc Carthy smiled incredulously. "Every body, my Lord, knew that our object was to close that booth. Will you give it under your hand, that you alone of the whole town was ignorant of it? and that you had no conversation on the subject with Mr. Archer?"

"My verbal assertion is sufficient, I should think, sir."

"Not in Mr. Malony's opinion, this time, my Lord," Mc Carthy retorted.

"I certainly will not give any other voucher, sir," the Earl answered, reddening with displeasure.

"Then, in that case, my Lord, I am directed by Mr. Malony to demand satisfaction for what he considers an intentional injury on your Lordship's part," said Mr. Mc Carthy.

"I have done what I promised," insisted Lord Templemore, "and I will not suffer myself to be provoked into a quarrel with Mr. Malony, because he happens to be in an ill-humour. My life is far too valuable to my family to risk it in an idle brawl, with a hot-headed young man like Mr. Malony."

"That is your answer, my Lord?"

"That is my answer, Mr. Mc Carthy."

"I am afraid, then, that such an ar will not satisfy Mr. Malony, and that he consider himself obliged to give your L ship a rather unpleasant proof of his op of your conduct," said Mr. Mc Carthy, r and moving towards the door.

"Mr. Malony had better take care ho subjects himself to a law process," Lord T plemore observed, as he rang the bell.

His Lordship immediately discovere had very particular business at Mount P sant, and was stepping into his carriage, a an hour after the above conversation, whe felt a whip gently applied to his should and looking round, beheld his broken-prom holder, Mr. Malony.

"I don't repeat the blow, my Lord, bec you are a man double my age, and I d want to do you bodily harm; but only to grade you, as that man deserves who does injury underhand, and refuses giving the c satisfaction in his power. Now, take not all of ye," he continued, turning to the cr of idlers assembled round the carriage, loitering about the street, "that I have lai whip across Lord Templemore's shoulder

and so saying he walked away, whistling, and tapping his boot with the said whip.

Soon after, nothing was talked of, all over the town, but the approaching hostile meeting between the flogger and floggee. Happily, however, the constituted authorities interfered, and the parties were bound over, in recognizances of a thousand pounds each, to keep the peace; and so, much to the mortification of all "whom it did *not* concern," there the matter ended.

We wish that Lord Templemore's treachery had produced no worse consequences than that of personal degradation to himself; but unluckily, through his prevaricating conduct, he had not only been the means of keeping open a booth which the Warringdon party wanted to close, but there was now a strong probability that, owing to him, a booth would close, which they wanted to keep open.

In expectation of the election being immediately terminated by the event first alluded to, the Warringdons had neglected having the necessary supply of men, to keep up the ball, in the great barony of ——; the strong-hold in fact of the Castle Wilmot interest; that

CHAPTER XIV.

AND now are not our readers as wearied of the noise and confusion of an Irish election, as our Viscount himself? We think it more than probable that they are; and therefore we will spare them the added noise and confusion of the chairing; and yet we confess we do so reluctantly. There is something to our mind, so gloriously characteristic of the Irish people, in their true, deep-felt, deep-toned, joyous, affectionate, energetic huzza for a popular candidate; and then the windows crowded with ladies, many of them young and pretty; and all good-humoured (that day at least),

C—— not having the advantage of being a cavalry station); they naturally attracted the brightest eyes in the room. Then there was Mr. Malony, and Mr. McCarthy, and a number of other young, laughing, dancing men of good property; and then the young member himself, all gallantry and politeness; and then the charming Lady Anne, soft and ingratiating as usual; and then Isabel, who seemed that night to tread on air, her step so bounding, and her countenance so radiant with happiness; the happiness of loving, and being beloved; and perhaps with a little vanity too; her lover was an admired and popular man, the object for the time of engrossing and flattering attention,—and a few days more, and she would be his bride!—a Viscountess too! —happy, happy Isabel.

"I never saw her looking so well!" observed the lover to the mamma, with a warmth and earnestness of admiration, almost Irish.

"Humph! the same as usual, I think,—I can't say, that I see much difference," replied the mother, carelessly.

Somebody who overheard this answer, thought it extraordinary. It is clear the per-

son whoever he, or she was, did not
comprehend our friend Lady Anne.

"Where is Miss Wilmot to-nig
she is not ill," said several peo
course of that evening, to the you
Mamma.

"No, thank God! not at all, bu
ferred remaining with an invalid fri
Lady Anne coughed, or smiled, an
tiously changed the subject. Of co
enquirer either already knew, or spe
covered, that Mr. Barham was th
alluded to, and naturally enough c
there must be "something in it,"
Anne, the pink of propriety, would ne
mit her daughter to remain almost al
a young man; nor would her daught
clined to lose a ball, for the best mer
she had in the world. The approachi
riage of Mr. Barham and Maria
therefore, became buzzed about the roo
in their zeal to prove their assertions
ing that they had the information fr
Barham himself; others gave Lady A
their authority; others Maria Wilmot,
on, but all were sure of the fact;

mother of the bride-elect was overwhelmed with compliments and congratulations; but she only "assured her kind friends that it was all a mistake; that there really was no truth in the report, there was not, indeed!"

"Oh, come now, Lady Anne, there is no use denying it," said Mr. Malony, "particularly to me, for I always knew how the land lay in that quarter. Well, I wish you joy; Barham is a right good fellow; just the man to make a woman happy; a capital shot, rides like the devil, and would as soon slap a man's face, as eat his breakfast,—I wish you joy from my heart! but when is it to be?"

"We have not yet quite settled the *when*," replied the Lady, smiling.

And here we would request the reader to imagine the ball over, and permit us to end our chapter.

fellow-duellist, being the noisiest, revellers, and most affectionate friends of the party. But, unfortunately he drank rather more on that occasion than was his custom; the consequence of which was, that (not being an eel, or an Irishman, and therefore not used to being skinned, or knocked on the head), before morning he was in a burning fever, roaring about fun and pistols, and requiring Pat Murphy's and Barthy Kilfoy's united strength to keep him from jumping out of the window; during his illness, nothing could equal Lady Anne's tender and devoted attention, sitting up with him, and suffering no hand but her own to smooth his pillow, or give him his draughts. Her care was, as every body remarked, motherly, and indeed, Maria also gained much credit by her praise-worthy attentions to their young guest; for as soon as he was able to move into an adjoining apartment, converted for his convenience into a temporary sitting-room, the kind Maria had always some nice little funny story, to beguile his tedious hours of recovery, seldom or ever leaving the invalid, except for a short walk, and apparently totally uninterested in the

"By the way, Miss Wilmot, I was just thinking how very droll it is that your guess about a duel being my second adventure, should have turned out true; is'nt it very funny? how you must have laughed when you heard I was wounded. I am very sorry I did'nt think of putting off my duel for a few days, just to see a little of the fun first,—but I was so vexed you see, at the time, that I never thought of it,—Miss Wilmot, I forget what you said my third adventure in Ireland would be?"

"To be married, I think," replied Maria, carelessly,—"was it not?"

"Oh yes, I remember; but I don't think that guess is as lucky as the other, for as I am not married yet, it is'nt likely I shall be, in the few days I remain in Ireland."

"Are you going so soon?" enquired Lady Anne, her heart sinking within her at this cool announcement. "I thought you were to wait for us, and travel together."

"Why I must, you see, whether I will, or no; Sir Willoughby Turner has written me such a blowing-up, because I stay idling here; he says, instead of being at college, reading

"Oh, yes, to be sure, quite serious; I hope you have too good an opinion of me to suppose I was not perfectly in earnest, when I invited her to Cralcourt: could you possibly imagine me so ungrateful?" he asked, with warmth.

The lady played awhile with the chain round her neck, and hemmed; at length, she said, in a constrained manner, "Mr. Barham, you have not, it seems, perceived the drift of my question."

Mr. Barham entreated her to explain; but she remained silent, and apparently, very much embarrassed, and somewhat offended.

"I am afraid I have displeased you, in some way, Lady Anne, I wish you would tell me in what."

"I will be candid with you," she replied, with great seeming effort; "I am disappointed in you."

"How,—what have I done?"

"You have acted ungenerously, very ungenerously, towards a family who deserved, from you, at least, different treatment."

"What family?" the young man asked, surprised.

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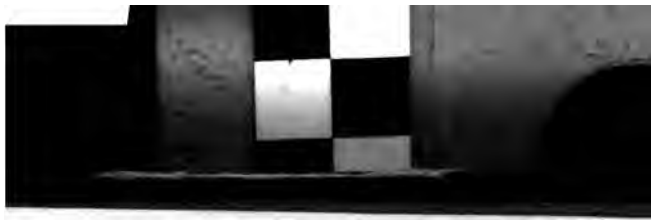


"Mr. Barham, when a gentleman pays exclusive attention to a young lady, seeking her society in preference to that of all others; and this preference continuing during months to be manifested before strangers, as well as her own family, what is the motive generally assigned by the world for his conduct?"

"Oh, people say that he is in love with her;—but why do you ask?"

Lady Anne continued:—"And if the young lady, considering these attentions in the light that all her acquaintances do, should become attached to the gentleman, giving him such proofs of her affection as subject her to public comment, do you think the gentleman would act generously, or even honourably, if, after all this, he invites the lady as a *friend* to his house?"

The light suddenly flashed on the bewildered Barham—"My goodness! surely you cannot mean *that*, Lady Anne?"

"Mean what?" she enquired.

"Mean that I paid attentions to Miss Wilmot, and that she———" he stopped, embarrassed.

"And that she is attached to you?" asked

Lady Anne, finishing the sentence for l
"Yes, that was exactly my meaning."

"But, Miss Wilmot and I never talke
word about love in all our lives,—no, no m
than I and Father John did: we used only
laugh together. I never intended,——"
hesitated again.

"I cannot possibly tell what you m
have intended, my dear Mr. Barham," s
Lady Anne, taking him up; "all I can kn
is what you have done; and all I can say
that every body who saw you together su
posed you were her declared lover. Do y
imagine I would otherwise have permitted h
to sit, for hours, by your couch, and to rema
at home and alone with you, on so remarkal
an occasion as an election ball? Her absen
was naturally commented upon, and th
there was a laugh among the gentlemen,
'Miss Wilmot, of course, had remained wi
her friend, Mr. Barham:' every one aski
when it was to be: I replied 'that my daug
ter had not taken me into her confidence, ar
therefore, that I knew just as much about t
matter as they did.' Either you have d
ceived my daughter, or she has deceived m

whichever way it is, she will now become the ridicule of all the envious misses of her acquaintance; the gay, laughing Maria Wilmot turned into a lackidaisacal young lady, condemned to wear the willow, will, of course, amazingly divert them; and, for this highly gratifying situation, she will have to thank you. Am I not, therefore, justified in saying that you have acted ungenerously towards her?"

"But how am I accountable for what people choose to say I meant, but which I did not mean?" asked Barham, naturally enough objecting to Lady Anne's forced inference.

"You don't feel any regret, then, at being, though unintentionally, (as you assert) the cause of injury to an amiable and confiding young person?" enquired Lady Anne. "I must, in that case, have, indeed, a bad opinion of you, and bitterly regret the day we ever met."

Poor Barham bit his lips, and knit his brows in painful and perplexing cogitation. He could not bear to think of his kind and merry friend, Maria, becoming the laughing-stock of her acquaintances, because she had so often

was nothing else talked of at the ball, last night:—well, I wish you joy; you could not have made a better choice."

"I wonder why he did not choose her himself, then," thought the young Englishman.

Mr. Malony continued: "A good-natured, pleasant girl, as ever lived, and devilish fond of you, she must be, to have stayed whole days in your sick room, instead of dashing about at the election, and, faith, we had a loss in her; many a man she has laughed into voting for her father:—she will keep you alive, Barham."

"But, suppose, Malony, that all this should be a mistake, and that we are not going to be married, at all; what would you say, then?"

"Why, I should say it would be very odd in you, and very unlucky for her: I assure you, that both herself and mother are commented upon already, for their imprudence about you, and nothing kept the peoples' tongues between their teeth, at the ball, but the supposition of your engagement. Oh, no,

you are too honourable a fellow for that, served Malony.

"I am in for it, I see," said Barha himself: he paused a moment, and then a aloud, "Well, Malony, no harm done, w ever they say, for we *are* engaged."

"To be sure, I knew you were; have got your guardian's consent?"

"I have not yet applied for it."

"He may refuse, perhaps, thinking too young; but you can go to Gretna, in case, you know."

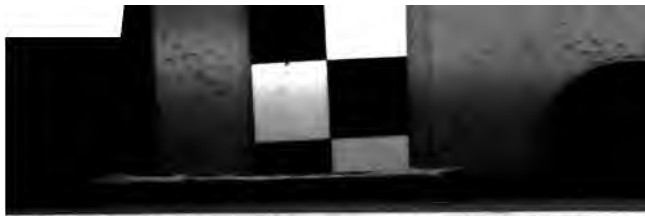
"Yes, I know," answered the "ha man."

Here Lady Anne and her daughter entered the room together.

Mr. Malony walked up to Maria, after the usual salutation, "wished her jo

"Of what?" she enquired, looking prised, and, for once in her life, at least, ing precisely as she seemed to feel; for mother's report of the conversation with intended lover had not, by any means, pared her for so speedy and joyous a con sion.

Mr. Malony laughed. "Ah, you wil



Maria Wilmot, I see, to the end of the chapter. How innocent you look!"

"I really am innocent of all comprehenhension of your meaning, Mr. Malony," she replied.

"Confess, like the frank, honest girl you are, that you are going to be married, and not sorry for it," he added, lowering his voice into a confidential whisper.

"Well, Mr. Malony, like the frank, honest girl I am, I declare to you 'tis all a mistake, and I *am* very sorry for it," Maria answered, summoning up her usual carelessness of manner.

"All a mistake! that's just what Barham himself said, at first, and afterwards acknowledged it was no mistake at all;— there's never believing a word you lovers say."

Lady Anne fixed her examining look on Barham; he understood its meaning, and immediately advanced towards her.

"Lady Anne," he said, in a low voice, "I wish to speak with you."

They withdrew together to a window, and Barham continued:—"Malony tells me, not only that every body thinks Miss Wilmot and

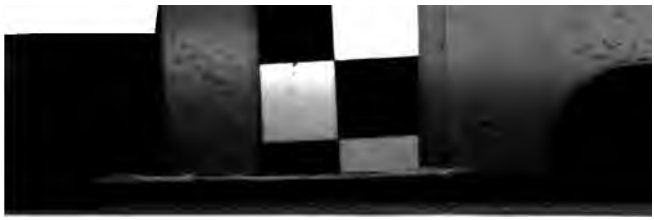
vases of flowers, intermingled in not ungraceful confusion, with the thousand little expensive trifles which a fashionable woman loves to collect around her. A lady, half-reclined on a sofa, listless and unoccupied, her eyes fixed on the fire; the blaze had caught the cheek turned to it, but the other side of her face was pale; and pale, one might have supposed, rather from late hours, than painful thoughts, were it not for the drooping attitude of her head, and the slight contraction of her brow. Her reverie was broken by a tap at door.

"Come in," she said, in a voice which harmonized with the pensive refinement of her appearance.

A handsome, fashionable-looking man entered.

"How d'ye do?" he carelessly asked, throwing himself on the couch opposite to that occupied by the lady.

"Very well, I am much obliged to you," she answered, in the same tone of apparent good-humoured indifference: but one, skilled in interpreting the inflexions of the human voice would have detected displeasure and



"No;" replied the lady, in a quiet tone, but with a heightened colour; "I have cut the opera merely for a night, whereas I have cut Lady Seaton for ever."

"Indeed!" said the gentleman, brushing up his hair at the mirror, and with affected indifference of manner, belied however by the sarcastic curl of his lips. "If it be not an impertinent question, may I ask why?"

"Why?" repeated the lady, and her beautiful mouth wore the same scornful expression as that of her companion.

"Yes, why?"

The lady gave a forced laugh, and the gentleman pushed in and out his lips.

"These little airs of disdain are quite bewitching, I confess, and would, to a lover, prove absolutely irresistible, but as I happen unfortunately to be only your husband, they are thrown away upon me. May I request then that you will favour me with an intelligible answer to an intelligible question: why do you intend cutting your friend Lady Seaton?"

"*Your* friend, you mean, my Lord."

"Well, granted she is my friend, is that a

world," Lord Glenville replied, in a tone of suppressed anger.

"Very possibly; all the world does not happen to know what I know of her."

"And do you imagine that it will be in your power to put out of society the most admired woman in London, yourself always of course excepted?" the Earl added sarcastically.

"I do not want to put Lady Seaton out of society, I merely desire to exclude her from my own house."

"As your house happens also to be mine, I beg leave to enter my protest against that decree. While she is received anywhere else, she shall be received here," said Lord Glenville, in an easy unembarrassed tone of authority.

"Then, my Lord," replied his lady, "it is fair to inform you that the day she enters your house I leave it."

"And so I must e'en take my choice between you? sad alternative! I would fain be blessed with the presence of both," the gentleman sneered.

"My God! is it then come to this?" Lady Glenville murmured.

bowed before Thee in gratitude; I never gave thanks for my blessings, nor prayed for their continuance. I was happy, and I cared not to enquire who had made me so. I did not even come to Thee in my sorrow. I sought consolation elsewhere for a wrung and wretched heart—sought, but never found it! My friends laughed, while I wept. From one being alone have I met sympathy; and from that sympathy, oh, my God! in mercy pro tec me now!"

She was still in the attitude of supplication when the door suddenly opened, and Lord Glenville and his friend entered: she arose hastily, and a deep flush of resentment and confusion overspread her face, as she glanced from her husband to his companion.

"*La belle dévote!*" exclaimed her lord, ironically. Tiverton, confess I am the happiest husband you know; 'tisn't every man who when he unexpectedly enters his wife's boudoir, need only fear interrupting a flirtation with Heaven. How interesting to find her, before whom all knees bow in homage, herself bending the knee! What a pretty subject for a sonnet! 'On Lady G. praying.' We have

playing beauties, but no
recollect, on a praying
subject for your muse, I
with the fair devotee, wh
to Lady Seaton's," accor
insult by a glance of a s
sion at his wife. It did
by her, for she happene
raise her eyes to his;
had mounted to her face
left it at his glance.

"*Adieu, mon ami!* I
in the Park," said the fa
he ran down stairs.

Lady Glenville had
easy, unembarrassed ma
talked of all the nothi
more than her custon
evident to her companic
her complexion, that he

"Why should you imagin e so?" she asked.

"Again at your old habit of giving a question for an answer!" Lord Tiverton said, smiling. "And yet I would not, if I could, break you of it; 'tis the natural recourse of an ingenuous mind, that will not give an untrue answer, and cannot give the true one; and, in its simplicity, imagines it has, by its artless device, baffled the curious enquirer. Ah, but you are a bad dissembler, Lady Glenville: 'you wear your heart upon your sleeve,' and you know what follows."

"Hush!" replied the lady playfully, though tears stood in her eyes. "Who talks of hearts in these days? What would become of your character as a man of fashion, if I were to say that I had heard you mention such a word?"

"Lady Glenville, something has agitated you, this morning, I am sure there has. I know you too well to be deceived. Allow me, then, the privilege of a sincere and attached friend, and give me your confidence. I may be able perhaps to explain for you, or even advise. You will at least believe me anxious

to serve you; my ability to do so, a
mains to be proved: but such as I
and heart, you know that you can
me."

"I am obliged by your offer, my I
there is no room for explanation—n
counsel on the present occasion;" re
companion. "Lord Glenville has
to me his intention of forcing Lad
on me, and I—"

"Oh impossible!" exclaimed the
interrupting her. "Impossible!—yo
him."

"And I," the lady continued, "h
fied to him my intention of leaving
if he does. Oh no! I have not mista
she added bitterly.

Lord Tiverton rose abruptly fro
and paced the room in much agitat
denly he stopped:—

"And when you leave Glenvi
will you go, while awaiting the
arrangements for your future ma
Your mother is not in town, and
were, you know how little she is a

into your feelings—your virtuous feelings—of what is due to a wife; then your sister—"

"I know all you would say, my Lord," interrupted Lady Glenville. "I do not require to be reminded that I stand alone in the world," she added mournfully.

"Alone in the world!" he exclaimed, taking a seat near her; "no, not while I remain in it!" And then lowering his voice into a whisper, "there is one house at least which would open wide to receive you, one heart, where you would be enshrined, worshipped; a heart consecrated to you alone; one, I will not say worthy of you, but at least more worthy than his who would prefer a Lady Seaton to you. Try a new fate—you are unhappy—neglected: try a new fate, beloved Isabel!" he murmured tenderly, endeavouring gently to unlock one of the clasped hands between which her head was buried.

She withdrew her hand, but it was cold and trembling; and when she looked up at him, her face was deadly pale.

"Leave me, Marquis of Tiverton!" she said, slowly and solemnly. "We can never meet again. Leave me, my Lord," for he still

year, you loved me, and I was inclined to love you, but my mother! Ah, no! I will be honest with myself at least. My own ambition, my own worldliness whispered, I might do better, and I listened to those bad counsellors, and stifled my growing attachment. You are revenged, Tiverton;—I love you now. Ay—to my own conscience, and to my God, I will confess that grievous, sinful secret. The woman who, from ambition, would not allow herself to love you, when her love would have been virtue, now that she has attained all which in her worldliness she coveted, would give up all and follow you, were you again George Damer, and she Isabel Wilmot, over the world!—And the woman who says this is now the wife of another! Are you not revenged, Marquis of Tiverton? and is not my punishment, oh, my God! greater than I can bear, though not greater than I deserve!"

The footman who entered about an hour after Lord Tiverton's departure, found his Lady lying on the floor, in a state of insensibility. She was carried to her own room, and the next morning was in a brain fever, attended by three physicians, and the papers rang

CHAPTER XVII.

MUCH to Lord Glenville's disappointment, his lady did not die, although she had three physicians, and, as soon as she recovered consciousness, a clergyman, attending her.

"She must feel herself going, since she sends for a clergyman," thought her loving lord. A month passed, and Lady Glenville was still confined to her room, but able to sit up for a few hours. Her own woman brought her the cards and notes of enquiry, left during her illness; the greatest number of both were from the Marquis of Tiverton.

"The Marquis, my Lady, used to call four and five times a day, to ask after your

and my own weight of trouble at the same time. You have banished me from your presence, Isabel, but I cannot banish you from my heart. In a few weeks I shall leave England:—I have some idea of a journey overland to Persia. I require to break new ground; and, as it is possible, in my present state of health, that I may never return, will you allow me to see you, for a few minutes, before I depart?"

"No, no, no!" murmured the lady, (she had previously disembarrassed herself of Edwards' presence) I must not, I dare not again meet you, Tiverton. No: it would be a presumptuous tempting of my fate. No! when I was, as I thought, dying, I prayed to be enabled to root out of my heart my sinful love for you, and I am sure He heard me; it may not be done in a month, nor even a year, but, with His help, it will be done before I die, at least. Oh, I trust, I trust it will! No, Tiverton, although you are leaving, and, perhaps, for ever, your native land, I will not see you. No! although in losing you, I lose the only human being who cares about me, for you *do* love me, I believe, as well as

something to cling to, an

Edwards here bustled

"I have good news f

"Good news for me

pensively.

"Lady Anne is just

Lord Rochford's, and

you can see her. She

way from Rome, post

accounts in the papers

illness."

"Thank God!" excl

bursting into tears. "

ther! Oh, my mother!

you."

In a few minutes af

entered her daughter's

countenance was nearly

while her child lay al

contending feelings, in

"Dearest, dearest,

broken sentence was accompanied by a fresh burst of tears, and a closer embrace.

"My dear Isabel, pray compose yourself, do, my sweet child;—agitation is so bad for you in your present delicate state. I shall be obliged to leave you, if you are not more tranquil; I shall, indeed, my love, that's a dear girl. So, sit down, and we will chat a little together. And now, my dear Isabel," continued Lady Anne, when her daughter had recovered her composure, "do tell me what this quarrel with Glenville is really about. I have read and heard such various versions of it; all agree, however, in blaming you as precipitate and *exigeonte*. Now, my love, let me hear your story."

Isabel recapitulated all the circumstances of which the reader is already in possession. Lady Anne listened very composedly to the recital, and when it was ended, asked

"And is that all you have to complain of, my love?"

"All?" repeated her daughter.

"My dear Isabel, is Glenville the only inconstant husband in the world?"

"My dear mother, he is not; but he is

the only man who would force his
receive his——"

"Oh nonsense, my dear, why cou
take the matter as quietly as Lor
did?"

"Then, in my place, you would
ceived her?"

"Certainly,—sooner let her in, t
myself out,—it is not too late yet.
uncle Rochford has sounded Glenvi
on your agreeing to receive Lady Se
will overlook your hastiness, and—"

"Never!" interrupted Isabel,—"
never,—will I live under that man's
hour longer than I can help;—"*he*
my hastiness!" she exclaimed, star
in indignation; "he, the tyrant and t
the smiling, polite tyrant,—and bas
blooded traitor!—*he* talk to *me* of forg
Listen to *me*, mother: suppose I we
enough, nay, and vicious enough,
siate with Lady Seaton; suppose I w
get and forgive, on her account, aye
account of other outrages and insults
upon me, and boasted of to my very
the last three years,—I never can fo

forgive, his devilish project of *that* day; when he goaded me to madness, and then drove me to the brink of a precipice,—God! and does my mother tell me I should live with a demon like this?"

"My dear Isabel, you agitate me as well as yourself," replied the tranquil Lady Anne, "by all this vehemence. I give you my opinion, and that of every body who has heard the story,—and I most earnestly recommend you to consider well what you are about, do not, I implore you, give way to temper, in this crisis of your own fate:—you are now at the head of a splendid fortune, you have rank, fashion, beauty, every thing this world can offer; dearest child, thousands envy you the brilliant lot you are about to cast away in a moment of caprice; my sweet Isabel, be persuaded by me! what will a few hundreds a year be to you, accustomed to thousands?—and the world will be sure to turn its back upon you when you are only *poor* Lady Glenville. Oh, dear child, you will find a terrible change in people then!"

"Oh, I have not now to learn what the world is made of," answered Isabel, I am dis-

Lady Glenville took up the pocket-bible that lay near her bed-side, and chanced to open it at the words,—"When my father and mother forsake me, he taketh me up."

She threw herself on her knees, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A travelling carriage stood, some days a
wards, before the door of Glenville Hous

A lady, very pale and thin, descende
steps supported by two gentlemen, and
lowed by a female attendant. She was ha
into the carriage by the younger gentlem

"You have a fine day for your journ
he remarked.

"Yes, very!" she replied.

"I believe all is now ready," said the e
gentleman. "You have not forgotten anyt
Edwards?"

"No, my Lord, nothing."

"Then you had better set off, or you

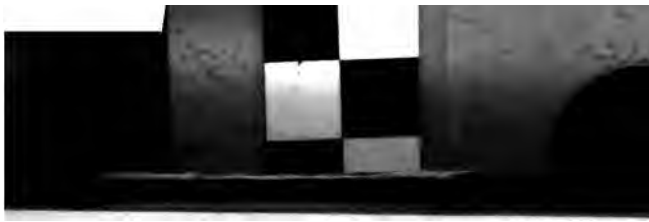
not reach Canterbury till late. Good bye, my dear Isabel," and he touched coldly the pale cheek of the traveller.

"Good bye, dear uncle, and many thanks and apologies for the trouble you have taken about me."

"Glenville," she added, extending a hand to the other gentleman, "I wish you well," and her voice slightly faltered.

He smiled, and nodded. The footman, after having closed the carriage door, mounted the box, the coachman touched his horses, and the carriage was soon out of sight.

The travellers stopped for the night at Canterbury. And Lady Glenville was lying on a sofa near the fire, gazing on the bright flame, in one of those fits of abstraction, in which we have before surprised her; one arm still fair, but no longer rounded, lying listless by her side, and the other holding a small volume, when the door opened, and a waiter entered, to inform her that a gentleman, on very particular business, wished to see her. Before she had time to reply, a tall man, wrapped in a cloak, stood in the door-way. Scarcely looking at him, she motioned him to a seat,



you became ill, I became ill,—when you suffered, I suffered, and you ask me, as you would a common acquaintance, what right I have unbidden to enter your presence,—what right!" he repeated vehemently.

"Is it generous to pursue me thus? I appeal to yourself, Tiverton, is it?"

"Well, why did you refuse to see me before?—why, tell me why?"

"Because I never will voluntarily find myself a second time in the company of the man who had once before insulted me."

"Insulted you, Isabel! but we will not dispute about the justice of that rather harsh term; granted however, that I had insulted you on a former occasion, you had not to fear a repetition of the offence, as I had previously intimated my intention of leaving the country, perhaps for ever, and I merely requested permission to take leave of you; and yet that humble request you refused, and you tell me your motive for so doing was resentment for my previous misconduct; but, Isabel, that was not your motive; the reason you refused to see me, and the only one was, because you doubted yourself."

caught by Lord Tiverto
make a scene, Lady Glen
that the first man who e
thrust out of it. I am
hear me, and then a word
be sufficient to dismiss m
fore ? your womanly prid
in arms,—I know they ar
city for presuming to thi
that you do not abhor m
suade me and yourself tha
perhaps, have been be
appeared a more humble
to lay bare my whole hea
all, and then, Isabel, deci
deserves to be cherishe
" In one respect, at leas
differ from the many adm
ing your married life,

eagerly proclaimed by all, when she was as yet but a young aspirant for notice. I saw where, and how, and why, she differed from the throng of bold or vapid fashionable accomplished candidates for brilliant establishments, which thronged the ball and concert-rooms. I saw, and loved, the simplicity, and yet acuteness, of her mind, the truth, the affection, the spirited, yet gentle nature,—her polished vivacity, her deeply feeling heart. I spoke to her of a retirement in a remote, but beautiful part of England, of the happiness and utility of a country life; of the interest of a home, where affection and intelligence preside,—but Isabel, your mother had already spoiled the fair materials entrusted to her; worldiness had even then crept into that young heart, and stifled its generous impulses. Shame! said I to myself, on the woman who rejects a true love, because it comes not encircled in a coronet, or shines not with the tinsel of fashion! From that hour I became a changed man, dissipated, almost heartless. I went abroad with my regiment, years passed away, I heard of your marriage with Warringdon, and I confess, heard it with perfect indiffer-

ence ;—so, thought I, she has at l
attained the object of her ambition.

" Not very long afterwards, I unexpe
succeeded to a title, and returned to
land. I saw that you devotedly loved
husband, and you began to rise in my e
tion, but I also very soon perceived th
were neglected by him, and in conse
unhappy. You then immediately bec
object of unworthy speculation to other
I admired the easy contempt with whi
treated their pretensions,—I insensib
back on my former feelings for you, bu
guarded in the expression of them ; y
admit that I never passed the pr
bounds, till the day Glenville left us t
When he banished you from his
offered you mine. I offered you my
my fortune, and my name, you reje
and dismissed me from your prese
then, Isabel, I looked upon you not
the most engaging woman I had ever
as one to be worshipped for the
character which, in the midst of s
insult, could remain firm to the s
mand of duty, and could courage

the tempter, though he came in the form of the man you loved, for I knew you did love me. I heard that you were ill, dangerously ill; in agony, I waited the result,—you recovered,—I begged to see you—and you refused, I ascertained the day of your departure for Dover, and I set off, and awaited your arrival in this town," he paused.

"And what good do you propose either to me or to yourself, by this step?" asked Lady Glenville.

He was silent a moment. "Isabel, when first I declared my love, you did well to reject it; for it was not then perfectly worthy of you, besides, you were not then assured of its sincerity. And again, there still remained a hope of accommodation with your husband, you had still a mother, relations, friends, acquaintances,—you had much, much to give up; but now you are separated from your husband; you are censured by your friends, deserted by your acquaintances, abandoned even by your own mother. You are going abroad on an income of six hundred a year, alone, you have no child, or interest in life.

Isabel, what is the world, or the world's

laws to you? Have you not already k
and felt its nothingness? Of all those
fluttered about you, in the sunshine of
existence, who is there that comes to
you now, or bring hope and consolation
brilliant Lady Glenville is forgotten
but one, the man who loved her even
childhood, seven years ago: ought no
man to be more to you, than a he
worthless would, ought he not, Isabel?"

"Yes! more, much more than this
with all its honours, and all its spl
would you be to me, if this world w
that stood between us;—but there is on
dearer to me than the world's opini
own self-respect, and there is one Bein
to me than you,—and that being is
Oh, had I known him earlier, I shou
been spared all I suffer at this mo
the feelings I now sacrifice in o
to his will, in that case, never co
arisen, or at least, never have abide
heart."

"Do you then reject my love, m
devoted, unchanged, and unchangea
do you indeed prefer going alone th

world, Isabel? and is the wretchedness I shall endure, nothing to you, Isabel,—think again! and well, before you doom me and yourself to a life of misery."

"Tiverton, have you ever read this book?" she asked handing him the little volume that lay by her.

"I cannot say that I have."

"Well, when you have read it, and carefully read it, and after you have prayed over it, come to me again and ask why I doom you and myself, to a life of misery.—Tiverton; if you had read that book, you would not have come as a tempter to the afflicted. Go travel, as you propose, think, and above all, pray, and then return to your country, and marry;" her voice here faltered for a moment, but she recovered her composure and proceeded. "But let not your wife be the daughter of a worldly mother."

"And now," she added, holding out her hand, "I will bid you farewell."

But he still lingered.

"Nay, 'tis useless, Tiverton, my mind is made up! God bless you, and forget me."

"Would I could!" he replied, in a voice

hoarse from emotion,—"but that c
be!—No, I love you as I shall ne
again; I honour you as I never
before! No, Isabel, I can never forge

He pulled his hat over his brows,
most dashing her hand from him,
room.

Isabel sank back on the sofa, w
lay some time so pale and motion
might have almost doubted that she
were it not for the low stifled sob,
intervals escaped her.

The next day, Lady Glenville
lapse, and was unable to proce
journey.

CHAPTER XIX.

And now will the reader travel with us to Paris, and, having been set down in the Rue Castilione, enter a *premiére* lighted up, and filled with company, composed of all that is distinguished by rank or talent, among the various nations of Europe;—poets, politicians, artists, mathematicians, generals, philosophers, and foreign ambassadors, he will there find assembled. Nor is the attraction of beauty wanting to complete the animation and embellishment of the rooms; and each lady has her little circle of admirers; but the largest group of this kind is, strange to say, formed round the plainest woman of the company;—

it is fair to state, however, that she is
hostess.

Almost every sentence she utters
lowed by a laugh, or a bravo! from t
tlemen by whom she is surrounded;
turns from the Frenchman to the Italia
the Spaniard to the German, and addr
each, in his own language, a few words
are either sportive, profound, or enthu
according to the pursuit and turn of
her auditor; and yet, while charmin
around her by her wit, or her eloquenc
is in her manner, at least, no attempt
play, no consciousness of power. She
liant, indeed, because she cannot be oth
and would have been equally so by h
fire-side.

A gentleman, who had just ente
room, advanced towards her.

"Well? have you found him?" t
asked, in a low hurried tone.

"Yes! after a long search, I have a
traced him to a café, in the Palais
where, for the last three days and ni
has been drinking and gambling with
low English blacklegs. I represented

the cruelty of leaving home, for days, without having previously announced to his wife his intention of absenting himself; and I tried to persuade him to return with me, but I am sorry to say, could not succeed."

"And what motive did he give? what answer?" enquired the lady.

"Oh! the usual answer to all argument, all entreaty!—a laugh."

The lady bit her lips, and looked thoughtful for a moment, but only for a moment; she quickly resumed her usual carelessness of demeanour. "Come, Sir Robert, give me your arm into the music room."

A few minutes afterwards, a voice of extraordinary power and compass, of thrilling expression, and clear and rapid execution, filled the apartments, and called forth on every side bursts of applause, even from professors of the art.

"What an uncommonly clever woman that is!"—observed a young man, to the gentleman that the lady of the house had called Sir Robert.—"But what is the reason, Turner, that Barham never appears at his wife's parties?—it looks odd, people say they don't live

she thinks him silly ; b
has ever seen him. I u
company ; your father
he not ?

Sir Robert bowed.

" Well, you ought, i
to tell something abou
fool ?"

" His wife has cert
vantage of him in point
Sir Robert, drily.

" I admire your cau
companion, smiling.
sidering your position i

" How do you mean

His companion ag
have never heard what
and the English Corinn
wife and accomplishe

you hear talking of Mrs. Barham, in any way but that of admiration and respect, refer him to me," and he immediately turned the conversation.

No one, throughout the evening, could have guessed from Mrs. Barham's manner, as she sang, danced, or talked, that her spirits were disturbed.

At length, much to the regret of all but the lady herself, her rooms began to thin, and finally, of all the guests, none but Sir Robert remained.

"Will you come with me to the café, where he is?" she abruptly asked;—"I will speak with him myself."

Turner, greatly surprized, endeavoured to dissuade her,—but she insisted, and accordingly they drove to the café.—He alighted, and entered the house, where, after remaining about half an hour, he returned to the carriage, without Barham.

"I cannot induce him to come to you;—I fear he is utterly lost," he said in a tone of sorrow.

Maria jumped out of the carriage.

"Shew me the way to the room where he is," she said hurriedly.

going among those fellows fit for a lady."

"The worse they are, cessity of getting him awa replied.

"But it will be in vain say will make the sligh him, pray do not think of ings to this useless travail, implacable of late."

But Mrs. Barham insis way; having opened the ment pointed out to her, s on the threshold, to try husband among the grou looking men, by whom h His face was flushed, an that of a low foolish profli losing, and alternately lau

He turned suddenly round, "Ah, is that you? What brings you here?"

"Come with me, for a moment, to the door," she replied. "I wish to speak a few words with you."

"Well, don't keep me long, then, for I am very busy just now," he said, following his wife out of the room.

"Barham, why have you not come home for three days?"

"Because I did not choose it," he replied. "I had a mind for some fun;—do you think I am going to ask your leave, whenever I may like to have a lark?"

"Why not at least tell me where you could be found? Why leave me for days uncertain what had become of you?"

"And if I had, Turner would have been after me, dogging me every place I went. He thinks because his old father kept me in leading strings once upon a time, that I am going to let him do the same now, but he will find himself mistaken."

"My dear Barham, I do not want to keep you in leading strings, I assure you," observed Turner quietly. "I merely offer you advice

which you are at liberty, of course,
or reject, as you please; but which
sake of the old friendship subsisting
our families, however ungraciously
receive it, I shall continue to offer.
have no object in view but your o
fare."

"Aye, aye, I believe as much of t
like," replied Barham, with a loud
"that is always your gammon, but I
such a spooney as you take me for."

Turner shrugged his shoulders co
ously. "Well, my good fellow, tho
will not listen to my advice, will you
your wife?"

"Thank you! I am not going to
Jerry-Sneak of myself, I can tell you
your comfort. No, no, I am my own
and I'll do as I like; so let her keep
vice for somebody who wants it. A
court she badgered me because I ha
running horses, and betted a little;
cause I had hounds, and used to like
fun with my grooms and huntsmen; an
am here, she keeps poking at me, becaus
with a few friends. Ever since I ma

has been the same thing; she is always finding fault, whatever I do; and for that matter, she has no right to do so—"

"No? has not a wife a right to remonstrate with a husband?" asked Mrs. Barham.

"Yes, if a man marries out of his own head; it is all very well then. One may bear a little teazing, when one has brought a trouble upon oneself—that is all fair enough."

"What do you mean, Barham? I don't understand you," said Turner.

"Ah, she understands me," he replied, doggedly.

Turner glanced at Maria.

Could the woman he now saw standing humiliated, as a wife, before a drunken fool, be the same brilliant, animated, self-possessed, intellectual creature, that had dazzled a circle of accomplished judges?

"My God! what a fate for such a being!" he said to himself, as he observed her colour rise, at her husband's taunt. Maria had, however, too much habitual command over her feelings, to notice the speech.

"Well, my dear Barham," said she, "I

me ?"

"Yes; but don't m
ment of it, for I want
friends."

"You accuse me of b
Barham continued, "but
I ever used an unkind w
patient one? Have I, B

"I don't say you ha
always reminding me tha
this, that, or the other;
from morning till night,
me laugh, as you used to
to go to school, you may
always telling me what a
would keep, if I would b
well, I did, and you cra
people, and then wonder
at home!"

whatever company you please: or, at least, to tell me, when you leave home, how long you intend remaining absent. Is that fair, or not?"

"I told you before, I have a mind for fun, sometimes," replied Barham.

"Well, and cannot you have the fun at home?" enquired his wife.

"Oh, no, I can't:—what fun can one have with a wife stuck up near one? Oh, no; you go your way, and I go mine, and we shall always agree very well."

"But, Barham, your way is leading you, fast and sure, to ruin. You cannot have fun without money,—what will you do when it is all spent?" asked Maria.

"Oh, that time is a good way off, yet," he replied, laughing.

"Not so distant as you think," continued his wife. "Remember what you owed before you left England, and how much you are losing every night at play, and——"

"Oh d——n it! there you are, again, at the old story!" he exclaimed, bursting impatiently from her, and returning to his party.

"Oh, why did I marry a fool!" ex
Maria, throwing herself into the c
"My God! to think of being tied fo
a creature like that! a creature that
be made even to feel for himself! a
be obliged to bend low to *him!* to be
to suppress my indignation at his insu
my contempt at his folly, in order, if p
to keep him within bounds! My unfo
child! what is to become of her?"

"What other woman could have su
herself at all, under such a fate?" as
Robert; — "how I do respect and
you!"

"Respect and admire!" Maria r
with bitterness: "Oh, no, you despise
you would despise the woman who
consented to marry a fool because
rich; how much more must you desp
who planned and plotted to marry him
ham spake but the truth when he s
never wanted to marry me. I deserv
taunt, and, therefore, I was obliged to
patiently, humbly. Ah! little does the
know, while I talk and laugh, how I
under the deep, deep humiliation, the u

able and innumerable mortifications of my lot! Insulted by a creature I despise; married to a man I am ashamed to acknowledge! You will wonder, perhaps, why I go into the world, at all, under such circumstances: but I should lose my senses if I did not, sometimes, force my thoughts into another direction. Besides, when in society, such as that of to-night, I forget that I am Barham's wife, I feel a momentary triumph in the mind which enables me to rise above the degradation,—the contemptible position that, at other times, bows down my spirit to the earth. And, then, the remorse I feel! the remorse, when I think that, had Barham married some pretty girl he liked, he might have turned out differently: to think that I have the wreck of his fate to answer for, as well as my own miserable accountability!"

"And is this the woman the world represents as unfeeling?" exclaimed her companion, half aloud.

"I cannot wonder that it should," observed Maria, "for I long thought that I was so myself."

"And yet, perhaps, she was not so much to blame, after all," observed Maria, "according to the opinions she held; for, intent as she was upon marrying her daughters well, and seeing me unattractive in person, and, therefore, unlikely to succeed, as it is called, unless pushed forward, she found herself necessarily compelled to stifle my sensibility, lest it should interfere with my judgment, and prevent my taking proper measures to secure a good 'establishment.'"

"And so you married Barham because your mother persuaded you that you were not a woman to be loved? My God! if we had but met sooner!" he continued, seemingly affected.

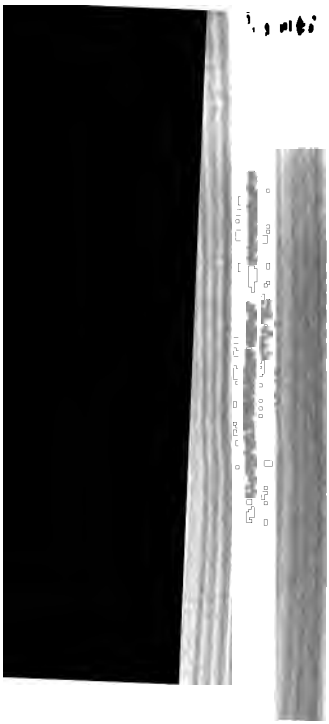
The carriage just then stopped at the door of her house, and Mrs. Barham also appeared agitated.

"I over-heard your exclamation," she said.

"And it has offended you?" he asked.

"I will be candid with you in all things; —no, it has not offended, but it has grieved me, because I must no longer meet you as I have done."

"Forget what I said,—it escaped me unin-



replied Turner.

"I cannot forget any
Turner," replied Maria
been already informed th
on; yet, while I felt ther
for censure, I was reluc
society of a tried and va
fools talked, and I ther
day to day, coming to
always had too little res
of others, but——"

"But," interrupted T
no necessity this morning
why should any thing l
cause you to alter your o
judge of me as a mere
hope, nor of yourself
why may we not meet a
mising never again to e

been remarked, and I had intended, in consequence, withdrawing myself, in a degree, from your society;—you will allow me, however, will you not, occasionally, to see you?"

"Better not, for some time, at least," replied Maria. "It is not that I think so badly of you, or so meanly of myself, as to *fear* you; but it subjects to a strong and disadvantageous contrast one that I am bound, as much as possible, to regard, and will make my duty still more irksome than it is. I shall leave Paris for a few weeks; meantime, persuade, if you can, poor Barham to play and drink less, and, when I return, you will probably be setting out for England;—Good night, and God bless you, till we meet again."

Turner was silent for a few moments, and the usually calm expression of his countenance became disturbed. "You are right," he said, at length, and turned from the door.

Maria hurried up stairs to her own room, and thence to an adjoining apartment. She noiselessly approached a bed, where a child lay asleep, and which was calling, in uncon-

Three months after I quitted Ireland, with Barham, he came into our neighbourhood!—but no, the woman who could sell herself for gold was not worthy of a better fate! I do not complain,—I deserve it all, and more."

CHAPTER XX.

A MONTH passed, and Mrs. Barhar
from her tour. Several letters had a
ring the interval, but which had no
warded, from uncertainty as to he
in her movements from place to pla
the number now laid before her was
old date from her mother, inform
Isabel's quarrel with her husband,
approaching separation; throwing
blame, as was to be expected fron
with Lady Glenville herself, on her
announcing her firm determination
her, for the future, to her whims an
ties, and mentioning her daughter'
her protection, and her refusal.

"She shall have mine then!" exclaimed Maria. "Isabel, you wronged your sister, when you did not write to tell her that you wanted a home;—yes, for, even in my most selfish and hardened days, I should not have given you the answer your mother gave. Oh, I wish I had received this letter before; Isabel will think me so barbarous never to have taken any notice of her all this time;—and now where will a letter reach her? for, according to the date of my mother's communication, she must have already left Glenville House,—and ill too,—poor Isabel!" and she was sitting down to write to her sister, under cover to Lady Anne, when a letter, just come by the post, was handed her. It was from Edwards, Lady Glenville's woman, informing her of her sister's illness at Canterbury, and that her Lady having strictly forbidden her communicating the intelligence to her mother, she dared not disobey her commands; although very uneasy at so heavy a responsibility resting upon herself alone: she therefore took the liberty of letting Mrs. Barham know Lady Glenville's dangerous state, and begging her instructions how to act.

That evening Maria and her little gi
on the road to England.

Notwithstanding all the precaution
tenderness could suggest, to prepar
Glenville for a meeting with her sis
agitation had nearly proved fatal to he

"You will live with me, will you n
own dear Isabel?"

Lady Glenville leaned her head
sister's bosom, and for some moments
of them spoke.

"Yes!" Isabel replied at length, "
it shall be with you, Maria. I wis
known you sooner and better. I sh
have been thrown on the dangerous s
of another. I never did you justice, M

"A great change has come over m
Maria, "since we were girls togethe
learned to feel—the great barrier tha
separate our minds is removed. My
has been softened, and yours strengt
the few years of our married lives
now be, what we never were before,
heart! counselling, sympathizing
On *one* subject only we will never
cause it is one we must not
upon."

"True," replied Isabel. "But to keep a constant and effectual watch over our thoughts we shall need assistance. Do you ever pray, Maria?"

"No, but I will;" her sister answered pressing her hand.

"Your child shall be mine; we will educate her together; and God grant she may have a happier fate than either of her mothers!" said Isabel, throwing her arms round her adopted child.

CHAPTER XXI.

We will now pass over five years, an
reader to return once more to Wilm
Lady Anne and her husband are s
gether.

"Now, is not that ridiculous?
all people upon earth to set up for
She marries a man she cares noth
because he has a good fortune. We
his fortune—his estate is sold—he
out of a fit of drunkenness, and
won't persuade her to send hi
quietly, to a proper place of
'He would be treated cruelly,' s
she insists on taking care of him

talk in that way, she must be as mad as he is. I have not patience with such nonsense—is it not provoking, Wilmot?"

"Why, as Maria has patience, I think we may. I am only sorry she has such a miserable lot!" replied the father.

"And Isabel encourages her in the scheme—applauds it of all things. Such an account as Rochford gives of them!—he was down in their neighbourhood some weeks since,—it is really melancholy to think of it—they are become regular Methodists!—teach charity children their catechism, and make flannel petticoats for old women! My dear Wilmot, I am really astonished how you can laugh at such conduct."

"Why, my dear Anne, I think that they are, of the two, better employed even in 'making flannel petticoats for old women' than in flirting with young men. By the way, who was it that Tiverton married?"

"Lord knows! some nobody or other he chose for her piety. Rochford wrote me word. I never thought much of his sense,—but, however, I am sorry now I formerly discouraged his addresses to Isabel; yet how could